ED 024 848 24 AA 000 329

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Correcting Reading Problems in the Classroom. Final Report. Interpretive Manuscript No. 4.
Indiana Univ., Bloomington. School of Education.
Spons Agency- Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
Bureau No- BR-7-0981
Pub Date Mar 69
Contract- OEC-1-7-070981-3731
Note- 101p.
Available from- International Reading Association, 6 Tyre Ave., Newark, Delaware 19711 ($3.00)
EDRS Price MF-$0.50 HC Not Available from EDRS.
Descriptors- *Classroom Techniques, Evaluation Techniques, Grouping (Instructional Purposes), Individual Instruction, Instructional Materials, Nongraded System, Programed Instruction, *Reading Diagnosis, Reading Level, *Reading Programs, Reading Skills, *Remedial Reading, Teacher Education, *Teachers, Testing

The responsibility of the classroom teacher in the treatment and prevention of reading difficulties is discussed. An interpretation of research about a set of causes, model programs aimed at overcoming the problems, steps in setting up a program, and recommendations and guidelines for these programs are included. A discussion of how to identify specific skill deficiencies explains the use of teacher-made tests, classroom observation, and standardized tests. A description of sample techniques and of successfully operating programs suggests treating general and specific reading deficiencies by using a method which suits the particular needs, by properly organizing the classroom, by providing varied skill-building materials, and by adequately preparing the classroom teacher. Pitfalls to be avoided ard noted. Explanations of terms and techniques used in classroom diagnosis and a bibliography are appended. (JB)

Final Report, Interpretive Manuscript #9

March, 1969

"Correcting Reading Problems in the Classroom"

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This manuscript was prepared with a grant from the Bureau of Research, U. S.O.E., H.E.W., O. E. Contract #OEC-1-7-070981-3731.

Acknowledgments

The following groups were involved in the cooperative development of the interpretive manuscript project on reading problems: Indiana University Reading Program, the U.S. Office of Education, ERIC/CRIER, the International Reading Association, Editorial and writing assistance was provided by the David-Stewart Publishing Company.

Project Advisory Board

Mary C. Austin, Case Western Reserve University; William Durr, Michigan State University; Leo C. Fay, Indiana University; Julia Haven, U.S. Office of Education; Elizabeth Hendryson, National Congress of Parents and Teachers; Richard Kirk, David-Stewart Publishing Co.; Ralph Staiger, International Reading Association; Edward Summers, ERIC/CRIER; Carl B. Smith, Chairman, Indiana University.

The research data bank of ERIC/CRIER, Clearinghouse on Reading, Indiana University, was used in the initial information gathering stage of this project. Reading Diagnosis and Remediation by Ruth Strang, a book commissioned by ERIC/CRIER published by the International Reading Association, 1968, was quite helpful in distilling the research, and it contains a complete bibliography from ERIC/CRIER on the subject of reading problems.

We wish to thank the many people who assisted in gathering information, writing program abstracts, reacting to written copy and typing: Barbara Carter, Gloria Dapper, William Dowdney, Charles Mangrum, Mary Jean Woodburn, Beth Hansmeier, Mary Kathryn Dunn, Virginia Ollis, Deborah Reagan, and Andrea Price.

A special thanks also goes to the fine school systems who gave us guided tours of their reading programs. Those visited and contacted as

part of this project are listed in the appendix of this book.

Foreword

Many people have to make decisions about changing school programs. Before a program can be changed, parents, teachers, and school administrators must be committed to an idea or a program in order for it to be successful.

One of the areas that is undergoing rapid change these days is the treatment of reading disability. This book is one in a series of four concerned with reading difficulties and making adjustments in school programs to solve reading problems. People in our schools must face the question of what they can do about reading difficulty. Each of the four books in this series directs its message to a different person in a school staff. Each focuses on a different aspect of treating reading difficulty and what different staff members can do to make that treatment more effective. The four target audiences are the teacher--treating reading difficulty in the classroom; the reading specialist--treating reading difficulty within a school building; the principal--treating reading difficulty that is related to environmental factors; and the top-level administrator--treating reading difficulty through a multi-service diagnostic center.

It would be unwise for anyone to read only one of the four books and feel that he has a complete picture of what schools can do to overcome reading difficulty. Each of the books is a part of the broad picture; all four parts should be read in order to visualize the scope of the treatment of reading difficulties at various levels. Naturally, the classroom teacher will attempt to deal with minor disabilities whereas the diagnostic service center will focus on the more severe types of reading disability.

It is possible, of course, for an individual to read only that book which is directed to him personally and to get a picture of what research indicates about activities in his area. He can get descriptions of how to establish programs that will enable him to overcome certain types of reading disability. As long as he understands that he is concerned with, and that the book is picturing only a limited segment of, the total picture, he will have some perspective in trying to make changes within his area of responsibility and influence.

The U.S. Office of Education contributed to the support of the preparation of these books because it believes that the technical research information compiled by researchers and reported in research journals should be interpreted in a readable fashion to the people who conceive programs and make changes in school systems. The intent of the books, therefore, is to cut down on the time lag between research demonstration of worthwhile projects and the implementation of these projects in school systems. Naturally, the dissemination of information is necessary before change can take place. It must be noted however, that knowledge about successful treatment of reading disability is only the initial step in bringing about change.

It takes a person with a strong idea and a strong commitment to the improvement of the instructional program and the services that the school offers to instigate change. Someone has to be convinced that there are better ways of doing things and be willing to expend extra effort and time in order to bring about more effective teaching programs.

The overall strategy of these books is to look at the range of reading difficulties from slight to extreme, and to suggest that treatment, therefore, has to move on many fronts with various professionals working simultaneously. Thus, the ideal is to provide action by teachers, supervisors and administrators. If for some reason or other all of these persons do not act on the problem in their respective spheres of influence, an individual is not prevented from mapping plans appropriate to his responsibility and initiating action at his own level. That is the reason each of the four documents is directed to a different person. It enables an interested party to set up a program in his own area regardless of what happens on other fronts.

Each book contains

a) interpretation of research about a set of causes

b) model programs aimed at overcoming the problems

c) steps for setting up a program (directed to specific leaders in the school system)

d) recommendations and guidelines for those programs

These manuscripts were developed in the following manner: 1) There was a review of the research on reading problems from the published research literature since 1957. The data bank of ERIC/CRIER, Clearinghouse on Reading, was screened for data, as was the ERIC/CRIER book Diagnosis of Reading Problems by Ruth Strang, published by the International Reading Association. 2) School systems that had successful programs aimed at overcoming types of reading problems were visited by the authors in order to get a first-hand description of those programs. 3) A compilation of the research data and the program descriptions was made in an attempt to correlate what research shows with what people are doing to overcome reading problems.

This book is directed to classroom teachers and deals with their role in preventing and overcoming reading difficulties. It recognizes that most classroom teachers do not have specialized training in diagnosing and treating reading problems and so it includes a discussion of how to identify specific skill deficiencies, sample techniques for treating specific deficiencies, as well as discussions of such broad matters as organizing the class in order to treat reading problems.

INTRODUCTION

The classroom teacher is the single most important factor in whether, and how well, the child learns to read.

But to speak of the classroom teacher in this connection is to suggest a uniformity among teachers that simply does not exist. Not all elementary school teachers have been trained to teach reading effectively. Most secondary school teachers, who are confronted daily by children who cannot read with the efficiency needed to master high school material, have had no courses in reading. Some fortunate teachers are given a wide array of materials and equipment to help with the teaching of reading. Others have only the most limited resources with which to work. The other problems, which are the problems of education itself--overcrowded classrooms, children with no readiness skills in language, inadequate budgets to provide special help for difficult cases--confront teachers in varying degree. Finally, of course, not all teachers are equally talented.

Those classroom teachers who are confronted with children having difficulty in learning to read--which is to say virtually every teacher in the nation--could well profit from seeing what is being done around the country to overcome reading problems. That is the real purpose of this book--to describe any of the good ideas, techniques, and materials that are currently proving to be effective. Some depend for their success on greater expenditures of money for specialized personnel, materials, and equipment. Some depend on expanded in-service training to help the teacher improve her skills. Some depend, to a large extent, on knowledge of children with specific reading problems, and it follows, an improved attitude toward them,

The range of problems that the classroom teacher finds in the classroom has been treated in other books in this series. The problems created by the child's environment, those that require clinical help, and those that cannot be effectively handled in the classroom but require special remedial help are the subject of three other books. The classroom teacher's understanding of these matters can be increased by reading the books preceding this one. The book directed toward the reading specialist would be especially helpful to the classroom teacher since much that goes on in remedial classes must be followed through when the child returns to his regular classroom.

No one person can solve all the reading problems in a school district; nor can any one type of activity satisfy all needs. Every school system has reading difficulties that vary from slight misunderstandings of rules to severe disabilities with accompanying psychological and social deviations. A comprehensive reading program, therefore, includes the diagnosis and treatment of reading problems at all levels, slight to severe--a program that ranges from correction by a classroom teacher to treatment by a clinician. Without that range of treatment some children are bound to suffer serious defeat in learning to read.

The classroom teacher, the reading specialist, and the administrator all provide necessary ingredients in a workable, comprehensive reading program. When one or more fails to contribute his part, he destroys a significant portion of the program.

The classroom teacher provides the diagnostic and corrective bases. He must identify problems and determine to apply corrective treatment in the classroom or refer the child to someone who can give the needed treatment. If the classroom teacher sees that the child needs additional diagnosis or treatment on an individual basis, he sends the child to a remedial reading teacher (reading specialist).

The reading specialist works with individuals or with small groups and provides specific and concentrated treatment as long as the child needs the help. Estimates put 10 to 25 percent of the school population in need of that kind of specific help in reading (Strang, 1968, p.2)* The specialist and the classroom teacher remain in constant touch about the individual child so they can work cooperatively in bringing him to satisfactory performance in reading. Often a specialist will work only in one school building or share his time between two buildings.

It is estimated that one to five percent of the school population need highly technical diagnosis and treatment for severe reading disabilities that may have their roots in emotional, social, or physical problems (Strang, 1968, p.5). This kind of clinical diagnosis and treatment needs the support of the central school administration. Funds, communications, support, and encouragement for a comprehensive program must come from the top-level administrator. Unless the top-level administrator, the principal, the reading specialist, and the classroom teachers see reading problems from various levels and work with one another in referrals. treatments, and evaluations, every child with a reading problem will not get the help he needs.

It should be evident, therefore, that a comprehensive attack on reading problems comes about through the cooperation of many people. Certainly it is not possible for the classroom teacher to conduct an in-depth clinical type diagnosis and treatment of severe reading problems in his classroom. Neither his time nor his training permit him to do so. But the classroom teacher does have the obligation and the opportunity to identify specific reading skill deficiencies and can direct the child toward improving his reading by appropriate classroom exercises.

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*Strang, Ruth, Reading Diagnosis and Remediation. [illegible]

Definition of Terms

A number of terms will be used in reference to the roles of various people involved in the teaching of reading. The following definitions of roles should serve as a guide to the particular duties of each. These definitions, and analyses of qualifications for each of the roles, are taken from the Journal of Reading for October, 1968.

A reading specialist is that person 1) who works directly or indirectly with those pupils who have either failed to benefit from regular classroom instruction in reading or those pupils who could benefit from advanced training in reading skills and/or 2) who works with teachers, administrators, and other professionals to improve and coordinate the total reading program of the school.

A special teacher of reading has major responsibility for remedial and corrective and/or developmental reading instruction.

A reading consultant works directly with teachers, administrators, and other professionals within a school to develop and implement the reading program under the direction of a supervisor with special training in reading.

A reading supervisor (coordinator) provides leadership in all phases of the reading program in a school system.

Developmental reading instruction is characterized by starting at the instructional level of a child, helping him proceed at his own rate, and following a sequential series of reading activities. This kind of instruction is done in the classroom by the classroom teacher.

Remedial reading instruction includes the characteristics of developmental instruction but deals with children who read at two or more years below their capacity or grade level. This kind of instruction is given by a remedial reading teacher outside of regular classroom settings, usually in a clinic or special classroom.

Corrective reading instruction, like remedial instruction, includes the characteristics of developmental instruction. It deals with children who read up to two years below capacity or grade level and is given by the classroom teacher in the regular classroom.

I THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

In a typical school class of thirty, reading ability will range from those whose severe problems prevent them from reading at all to those who read with facility. Strang reports that from one to five percent of children have severe disabilities resulting from physical, psychological or neurological disorders, from 10 to 25 percent of children have moderately severe disabilities resulting from failure to master necessary skills, and from 40 to 60 percent of children have mild disabilities resulting from minor difficulty with some basic skill.* Applying these percentage figures to a school class of thirty, one or two children might have problems severe enough to warrant clinical help. From three to six of the children might have problems severe enough to require remedial help outside the classroom. Of the remaining children, between twelve and eighteen might have mild skill problems that require classroom attention if they are not to develop into more severe disabilities. The remaining children, who are doing just about what can be expected of them for their age and grade, might display slight difficulties in specific skills or might require individualized programs to prevent them from losing their skills and interest through boredom.

In far too many schools, the classroom teacher is expected to deal with all thirty children, including those who cannot learn to read without a highly technical diagnosis and treatment. School systems are now beginning to recognize that such an assignment is impossible for the classroom teacher to carry out. Remedial reading programs, described in the third book of this series, give an indication of increasing recognition of the need for special programs.

The classroom teacher is in a pivotal position, since the only general solution to reading difficulties is to prevent them from reaching the crisis stage. Without prevention of this nature, the numbers of children and the expense involved in treating them in remedial programs assumes such proportions that school systems are unable to deal with them.

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*Strang, 1968, p. 2.

No one is in a better position to prevent reading problems or to correct them as they appear than is the classroom teacher. An elementary school teacher, for instance, who meets a class for over 175 days, has some 800 hours for observation. Assuming a class of 30, theoretically there are more than 25 hours to devote to each pupil. Even granting the time spent for group instruction, the classroom teacher has an opportunity for individual observation and instruction that is denied anyone else in the school system.

The secondary school teacher does not have as much time for observation of reading difficulties because he meets his youngsters usually for only an hour a day and, therefore, has approximately 180 hours of observation time for any given youngster. This doesn't excuse him from taking a diagnostic look at the reading and comprehension skills of the children that come into his classes; it only means that he will naturally be less specific and more broad and more general in the observations he makes. He will be more concerned with the child's ability to recognize the vocabulary pertinent to his subject, his ability to read different length selections and respond to appropriate comprehension questions, and his ability to make use of the various study skill activities that are used as part of his teaching.

Environmental Factors

The classroom teacher must be more aware than anyone else of the effect of environment on the performance of children. Recently, much has been written about environmental factors as a cause of reading difficulty. One of the books in the Target Series is devoted to ways of overcoming environmental factors that can cause reading problems. What the classroom teacher should be aware of is that a knowledge of the home and neighborhood, and language pattern that the children have, can give him significant diagnostic information and help to adjust instruction to meet the specific needs of the children in his classroom. A child from a home where language is important and conversation is a significant part of family life will usually have a much easier time learning to read than a child who has had little home experience with elaborate language patterns (Bernstein, 1960; Hilliard and Troxell, 1937).

What are the factors in the home that are most often related to reading problems? A low socio-economic level is one, although parental attitudes and behavior may be more significant than the parents' education, income, or race (Dave, 1963). The size of the family, the child's position in it, and the opportunity the home presents for learning experiences relevant to school are also important (Gordon, 1965). The usual picture is of a large, impoverished family, usually mother-dominated (Gill and Spilka, 1965), living in a noisy, overcrowded atmosphere (Deutsch, 1963) that is often permeated with an underlying panic. The basic necessities are uncertain, adults unpredictable (Maas, 1951), the world suspect and threatening. Communication is often through gesture and other non-verbal means (Bloom, 1965; Milner, 1951), while the language used is terse, not necessarily grammatical, and limited in form. The home has few books, few toys, and little self-instructional material. The children rarely venture beyond their own neighborhood or even their own block. They are rarely read to, and there is little contact between parent and child. Rewards and punishment (often physical) are immediate (Kohn, 1959; Leshen, 1952). Learning to postpone gratification is as irrelevant to their way of thinking as learning for learning's sake (Gordon, 1964).

In such a noisy and chaotic environment, children learn to adapt as best they can. They may learn, for instance, to screen out sounds, sometimes only too well. Their habits of listening and hearing, their speech patterns and pronunciation, may prove inappropriate to the traditional learning situation in school (Jenson, 1963; John, 1963). In addition, they may be undernourished or lacking in sleep, inattentive, disturbingly aggressive, or ominously withdrawn (McKee and Leader, 1955). Their absentee rate is probably high.

This generalization, however, suffers the drawback of all generalizations: It is just that and nothing more. It points with accuracy to no individual case. Some children of poverty have learned to read easily despite economic deprivation; some economically middle class homes are as barren of cultural advantages as the poorest (Gordon, 1965). Middle class parents, whose anxiety about their child's progress in school takes the form of reproach rather than encouragement, may contribute as much to their child's reading problems as lower class parents who were dropouts and whose hostility or lack of sympathy toward school is reflected in their child's attitude.

Data about the home and neighborhood environment, then, can offer significant insights into learning--study habits and motivational drives--important factors in the treatment of any reading problem.

Even the most unskilled observer can spot the nonreader. (Recognizing the reasons for his inability to read is another matter.) But spotting specific reading difficulties and being able to analyze the skills involved in the reading process require knowledge, training, and experience. After having analyzed the problems, knowing what to do about them is something else. The remainder of this book is intended to help the classroom teacher sort out the problems and learn how other teachers are coping with them effectively.

II DIAGNOSING READING PROBLEMS IN THE CLASSROOM

With any problem, diagnosis should precede action. In the diagnosis of reading problems, the teacher tries to understand the child's reading strengths as well as his weaknesses. The more his strengths and weaknesses can be pinpointed, the more likely it is that a corrective program can be devised that will take advantage of what he does well and attack directly those skills he lacks.

A few general things can be said about reading diagnosis. For one, it should be continuous and interwoven with treatment. Secondly, the earlier the problems are discovered, the more hope there is for conquering them. A specific diagnosis is probably the key factor in prevention as well as in remediation of reading difficulties. Hopefully, diagnosis leads to "diagnostic instruction," which attempts to individualize instruction to match the teaching with the problems to be overcome.

The first step in classroom diagnosis is to describe the reading performance in terms of vocabulary, word recognition, sentence and paragraph comprehension, and related abilities (Strang, 1968, p. 4). Teacher observation and informal and standardized tests, which will be discussed later, are the chief tools for the teacher. Other indications might come from classroom exercises related to reading performance, short vocabulary quizzes over assigned new words, paragraph reading followed by writing sentences stating main ideas, new vocabulary words introduced through attention to word analysis skills. With some students who are having relatively minor trouble, the teacher can spot the difficulties immediately and take equally immediate steps to correct the problems.

Another diagnostic technique for the classroom teacher is to consider behavior, other than reading performance, which could be affecting the pupil's reading. The teacher may note, for example, that the pupil is passive or has a low energy level so that he simply cannot put out the effort that reading demands. Some pupils have such meager speaking vocabularies that it is impossible for them to decode or understand the words they encounter in reading. Still others display emotional problems, such as anxiety, that keep them from concentrating in school. And there are many instances of poor work habits, with an "anything goes" attitude, that can influence a child's ability to read (Strang, 1968, p. 5).

Checklists can be helpful in estimating pupil skills, attitudes, and behavior. A sample checklist for use in observing and evaluating attitudes toward reading is reproduced below. The teacher might use + or - to indicate the presence of or lack of the attitude under consideration. Other checklists can be devised to serve other needs.

Inventory of Growth in Attitudes Toward Reading	Judy	Ann	Jerry	Ed
1. Does he anticipate reading periods with pleasure?				
2. Does he use books frequently during free periods?				
3. Does he find opportunities for reading at home?				
4. Does he read newspapers and magazines?				
5. Does he show interest in reading a variety of books?				
6. Does he read for information?				
7. Does he usually finish the books he starts?				
8. What kinds of books does he like best?				
9. Does he make frequent use of the school or public library?				

A deeper level of diagnosis comes from an attempt to analyze activities related to the process of reading, such as auditory and visual perception, differentiation, association, retention, analysis, and evaluation leading to motor, visual, or vocal output. The Role of the Reading Specialist in Conquering Reading Problems, the third book in this series, describes this and other levels of diagnosis more fully. Some levels of diagnosis are ordinarily reserved for clinicians who include in a diagnosis such things as psychological, sociological, and intellectual disabilities that prevent a child from learning to read.

Two Objectives

In diagnosis, the classroom teacher has two objectives in mind. One is to determine the correct instructional level for the child. This level can be defined as that at which the child can read successfully with direction from the teacher. At this level, the child should be able to comprehend 75 to 80 percent of what he reads, to pronounce at least 95 percent of the words encountered, and to read orally with natural rhythm and good phrasing (Betts, 1946, p. 539). In any given classroom, it is likely that there are as many as five instructional levels. The second objective of classroom diagnosis is to discover the specific skills a child lacks. If this objective is not kept in mind, the teacher might continue instructing the child in skills he has already mastered and ignore those on which he needs special help.*

Finding the instructional levels for children in the classroom and identifying the specific reading skill weaknesses that each child has can be accomplished through various measurement and evaluation techniques. Formal group survey tests, informal inventories, and daily observation in the classroom are three specific ways of identifying the needs of children.

Group survey tests are one instrument to measure comprehension, vocabulary, and reading rate, as well as determining the grade level at which the child reads comfortably. The Gates Primary Reading Tests, the Iowa Tests of Educational Development are instruments widely used for group survey. In addition, the publishers of basal readers have produced tests intended to be used to see whether a child is ready for a specific book in in a reading series.

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*See Appendix A, "Techniques for Classroom Diagnosis of Reading Problems," for specific techniques and procedures

Survey tests are diagnostic only in that they give limited information on vocabulary, comprehension, and reading rate. However, more diagnostic information can be obtained through the use of teacher-made tests and informal reading inventories.

Teacher Tests

Probably the most widely used diagnostic tools are the teacher-made tests. In these, the teacher makes up the test on the spot and is looking for only one or two things. For instance, in working with a pupil, the teacher may wonder if the child can identify a certain digraph, such as "ch." She gives him several words beginning and ending with "ch." If she wants to test the child's comprehension, she simply asks him to read a paragraph, close the book, and then tell her what was in the paragraph or answer questions about it.

The informal reading inventory is somewhat more structured. Using a reading series the child has not seen before, the teacher has him read orally sample paragraphs at varying levels of difficulty. Comprehension questions dealing with facts and ideas follow each reading. By carefully marking errors made in oral reading and by evaluating the kinds and frequency of errors and answers to comprehension questions, the teacher can identify the child's independent, instructional, and frustration levels. (Johnson and Kress have a reading aids booklet on the development and use of the informal reading inventories, published by the International Reading Association.)

A word should be said about the various reading levels a child--or an adult, for that matter--has. The independent reading level is the one at which the person reads easily and comfortably, where he reads with and for pleasure(Betts, 1946, pg. 446). The instructional level is that at which he can pronounce 80 percent of the words or comprehends less than 70 percent (Betts, 1946, p. 539). The frustration level is the one at which the reader bogs down hopelessly (Betts, 1946, p. 451). Group survey tests usually indicate a child's frustration level. The child will usually have a higher instructional level than independent reading level, so if it appears that he likes to read material that the teacher things is too easy for him, he is simply seeking the level at which he can relax. In too many classrooms, especially those where instruction is not geared to individual differences, many of the children may be forced to read at their frustration levels. Further information on reading levels can be found in the foreword statement of this book.

Information To Look For

Whatever instrument is used, a teacher is looking for information about the child's general reading skills, his word attack skills, and other relevant data.

Under general reading skills, the teacher would note expression, nature of enunciation, skill in phrasing, word-by-word reading, physical habits during reading, and attitude toward reading. Word-recognition skills encompass the use of context to guess the word, adequacy of sight words, adequacy of procedure in phonics and structural analysis. Word attack skills will show up the pupil's ability to blend sounds, analyze words, syllabicate, recognize parts of compound words, and to recognize specific vowels and consonants. Word-recognition difficulties the reader might display are reversals, the wrong beginning, middle, or ending. Other difficulties the child might display are in repeating words, omitting them, or refusing them.

Related to general reading ability are such data as whether the child hears and sees well, whether he has speech difficulties, or other physical defects that might interfere with learning. His abilities to concentrate on and persist in tasks are directly related to whether he will learn to read.

Classroom Observation

The most obvious, and perhaps the most important diagnostic technique is the teacher's classroom observation of the child. It is a technique used every day by every classroom teacher and is probably the best one for understanding how a child reads. But it tells nothing about why a child reads as he does.

Dr. Ruth Strang suggests four safeguards for the classroom teacher to avoid misinterpreting observations of the child:

> "1. Since the student is always changing and growing, and observation that was made last year may not describe his present reading performance."
>
> "2. A teacher can observe only a small part of a student's total behavior. On the basis of such limited information, the teacher can make only tentative generalizations about the student's reading."
>
> "3. Observations made by a teacher may tell more about the teacher than about the student. His first impression of the student, his philosophy of education, and many other factors may color what he sees."
>
> "4. Ideally, observations should be interpreted in conjunction with interview, test, and other data. However, observations often are the only data that are available at the moment, and sometimes action should not be deferred." (Strang, 1961, p. 43).

The more a teacher is aware of what could be observed, the more she can improve her observation skills.

As a child is telling an experience in the classroom, the teacher could observe many things:

- whether the child's use of language shows a rich vocabulary or one that is meager or even downright wrong
- whether the child speaks in complete sentences, and whether he uses complex sentences
- whether he shows creative or bizarre imagination--or none at all
- whether he organizes his thoughts in proper sequence or just rambles on
- whether he shows a sense of humor (humor is highly correlated with intelligence which, in turn, is highly correlated with reading ability)
- whether he is interested or apathetic
- whether he is self-confident or shy

When the child reads aloud, the teacher has a chance to see what skills he has in recognizing words, in pronunciation, phrasing, and expression. The student will also give away his feelings (attitudes) about reading, either by sitting up straight, eager to read next, or slouching in his seat, paying little attention.

If a child substitutes words in a sentence, he gives clues about his abilities. If the word is incorrect but makes good sense, then he probably comprehends what he reads. If it makes no sense, he is just pronouncing words with no understanding or regard for meaning.

Group instruction and discussion present many opportunities for observation, but also bring up some questions for the classroom teacher. During group reading periods, the teacher can observe the children who like to participate and willingly do so. During group discussion, a usually silent child may reveal undetected ability, such as responding to a story or a picture with exceptional originality. However, there are pitfalls in group instruction. For one thing, the children probably do not all read at the same level and so there is always the danger of the good readers being bored by the material and the poor readers being unable to follow it. Even so, group interaction has its salutary effects. The brighter students may stimulate those having difficulties and encourage them to read better. The poorer ones may catch the sense of excitement in reading and motivate them to learn. It is up to the teacher to see that the poorer students are not embarrassed by having the others laugh at their mistakes.

The more able the classroom teacher, the fewer children who will need remedial instruction. Providing intelligent reading instruction depends on the ability of the teacher to diagnose the child's reading status, to teach him on his appropriate instructional level, and to develop a reading program that is sequential and relevant to the child.

Part of the classroom teacher's job is to know when a disabled reader needs greater help than can be offered in the classroom. Pupils who should be recommended for remedial classes or for clinical study are sometimes not referred by teachers who feel that such referral might, in some way, be a reflection on their teaching abilities. An honest recognition of the limits of time and expertise open to the classroom teacher would be far better for the child who, if he is denied extra and expert help, could be doomed to the life of an illiterate. It is not always easy for the classroom teacher to know when the child ceases to benefit from instruction available in the classroom and needs special attention outside the classroom on a more individual basis. In those cases where the teacher has difficulty in making a decision it is good for him to discuss the problem with the principal or the school counselor and the reading specialist. These are the people involved in making decisions about the movement of children from one kind of teaching situation to another, and, gradually, some criteria should be established that would help all classroom teachers making the decisions. Naturally some of these decisions have to be based upon the availability of a reading specialist and the number of children who need treatment by that specialist. It should also be evident that the teacher must provide some observations and data on any child that he wants to refer for special help. Part of that referral should include a statement of what he has done in the classroom to try to correct the disabilities that have been observed.

III WORKING WITH GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS TO CORRECT READING PROBLEMS

Children learn to read in a number of ways, not through a single approach. The Harvard-Carnegie study found that schools use basal readers, experience charts followed by basal readers, phonics programs that precede and accompany basal readers, the language experience approach, and individualized reading programs to teach children to read (Ausin, et. al., 1961, p. 21). Most of these so-called approaches are associated with specific kinds of materials and so we are accustomed to thinking of correcting problems in reading by referring to materials of a special kind. A more fundamental notion of how to correct reading difficulties, however, should be to think of the approach to teaching children to read as a system. A system is a planned strategy for instruction with an underlying rationale. If the teacher knows this strategy and rationale, it is much easier for him to identify problems that the children are having and what steps to take to overcome those problems. Most of the approaches to teaching read, especially at the beginning level, can be arranged into four kinds of systems: 1) the controlled vocabulary approach, 2) the multi-sensory language arts approach, 3) the programmed instruction approach, and 4) the individualized approach. Each of these systems represents a way of getting children to look at reading, handle the analysis of new words, develop an attitude toward the process of reading, and build habits of interest and interpretation of what is read.

The controlled vocabulary system approach is the most structured of the four systems for teaching reading. The learner reads from a book which is carefully graded in terms of reading difficulty and controlled from the standpoint of vocabulary, sentence length, and complexity of story. The learning principle of the controlled vocabulary approach is to proceed from the known to the unknown. This principle applies both to reading vocabulary and to the content of the stories that appear in the readers. Thus, very familiar words associated with the home or neighborhood environment are used in the beginning stages of reading. These words are repeated again and again so that the only problem is one of visual recognition and not one of meaning or comprehension. One of the features of the controlled vocabulary approach is the carefully selected vocabulary and its planned introduction of elements in a given sequence. The child is introduced to and practices the elements until he has mastered them. This approach or system is the one most frequently used by school systems in the United States (Austin, 1961, p. 21).

The multi-sensory language arts approach contrasts in structure and organization with the controlled vocabulary approach. The multi-sensory language arts approach springs directly from the interests and needs of the child, thus very little structure can be predetermined. In this approach, the children create or select their own reading materials and a teacher uses inductive techniques to get the children to understand word recognition techniques and to comprehend sentences and longer passages. The emphasis of this approach is on the interrelatedness of various communication skills. Speaking, listening, reading, and writing form various facets of personal communication, and of course the basis for all communication is thinking. Therefore, the principle on which this system operates is this: What a person thinks can be said; what he says can be understood and written; what he writes can be read and understood by someone else (Loban, 1963; Strickland, 1962). In the beginning stages of this approach there is a decided attempt to show the relationship between oral language and written language. Often, teachers ask children to dictate stories to them, and the teacher writes down the stories with the children. The students are then encouraged to read back from the paper what they have just dictated. Thus, reading instruction utilizes the language and experience of the child, and, as he grows in his ability to read, with the teacher identifying words and sounds as necessary, the child begins to select books that are appropriate to his interests and to his reading level, all the while sharing his ideas and his new-found interests with other members of the class. This is not to say that commercial materials are not used, for teachers often supplement the experience stories and individual exercises generated from these stories with exercises from commercial workbooks that fit the needs of the children as the teacher identifies them.

The programmed instruction approach takes the student through a series of carefully planned steps, often in the form of statements or questions, leading to pre-designated behavior. The child, for example, would be able to make distinctions among a number of words and find those which rhyme with the word "rat." Programmed instruction usually relies quite heavily on carefully sequenced materials that enable a child to move at his own pace and to make inductive conclusions about words and sentences. One of the significant features of programmed instruction is that it provides immediate reinforcement to the learner and enables him to see when he's making a correct or an incorrect response.

The individualized approach is related to the language arts and the programmed approaches in these two ways: It enables a child to select his own reading material based on his interests and needs, and the child proceeds at his own rate through the development of reading skills. Nearly all reading is done from trade books that the child selects himself after a conference with the teacher. The teacher's responsibility is to provide a checking system and to evaluate the child's progress. Children are brought together only when the teacher finds that several of them need an explanation or practice in a given reading skill, or as a mutual interest among the children indicates the desirability of having discussion or creative activity related to this interest.

It would be advantageous, of course, for every learner to be matched with the system that best suited his personality and his learning style. The matching of learner with a system to suit his needs will, however, usually not occur, due to the organizational pattern and the materials selection practices of schools in the United States. Even if learners were matched correctly, that still would not eliminate all problems, for some learners are going to experience difficulty no matter what system they are in. The advantage of teachers knowing about several systems is that they can adjust their instruction to individuals and use techniques from various systems when they find that students learn certain phases of reading best when a particular approach is used. Generally, however, the same techniques that are effective in the general developmental program can be used effectively in corrective activities.

Each of the systems described here indicates different arrangements, or organizational patterns, for classroom instruction. The same variation is necessary in organizing classes for corrective instruction. A classroom has to have a flexibility for corrective instruction and has to be organized so that it can be carried on with a minimum amount of confusion. Schools across the country have experimented with a number of techniques for corrective reading activities in the classroom. These activities can have two different focuses: One is aimed at prevention and the other is aimed at the correction of a specific skill deficiency found in a specific individual at a given time.

Schools interested in prevention organized a classroom and carried on scheduled activities that were designed to eliminate some long-standing problems. For example, some schools set up listening posts in classrooms and had the children go through a series of exercises to develop good language patterns, thus applying preventive measures aimed at correcting reading difficulties. On the other hand, upon realizing that a child does not know how to summarize or give the main idea of a paragraph, the teacher can have that child work in a conference corner with a series of exercises that he takes from a supply of books in the classroom.

It is the opinion of many of the administrators and teachers interviewed for this book that unless the classroom structure is changed to encourage work on specific problems, either for groups or for individuals, corrective activity is likely to go undone. The next few paragraphs, then, discuss a number of instances in which teachers have organized their classrooms, organized their instruction, or changed the structure of their classrooms in order to carry on corrective reading activities. It is understood, of course, that the reader must consider the system under which he is working and try to adapt the suggestions of these successful organizational patterns to his own situation.

Here are some of the elements that were used or juggled in successful programs:

1. Materials
2. Rearrangement of Desks and Equipment
3. Personnel Changes
4. Reduction in Class Size
5. Ungraded Approach
6. Team Teaching

Successful Programs

Given below are brief descriptions of the organization of successful programs for corrective reading in the classroom. In many cities teachers and administrators reported a decided improvement in students who were being treated in the classroom under these organizational patterns. As mentioned before, the patterns naturally have to be adapted to whatever system or conditions exist in the teacher's own classroom.

The teacher, though interested in meeting the needs of the individual, faces an entire class. Organizing instruction so that a class may be taught as a community, with all members doing educationally worthwhile things, is the teacher's goal. At the same time, instruction must be adjusted to meet the needs and characteristics of individuals. This means that the classroom and the teacher must be so organized that the teacher can devote attention to children who need special guidance. The problem of adjusting instruction to individual differences in a classroom is probably the most difficult of all.

Title I reports from the U. S. Office of Education and the Austin and Smith study (1967) summarize many of the innovative ways in which school systems are attempting to reorganize the classroom for more corrective work on reading. The most frequent change, though not innovative, has been the addition of new materials and equipment. Many reading directors feel that providing the materials and equipment is an initial step in getting corrective activities into the classroom. It must be noted, however, that simply providing that material will not assure improved reading ability on the part of the children. The materials must be easily accessible to the teacher and the students, and the teachers, of course, must have training in the use of the materials and equipment. Probably the most significant benefit of having a wide variety of materials and equipment, beyond simply enabling the teacher to turn quickly to a handy reference on corrective instruction, is increased student interest. The abundance and availability of these items spark the students' interest and can lead to learning, provided that interest is capitalized on.

Choosing materials and equipment poses some problems, and sometimes the people who choose do not know enough about reading to select materials that will serve classroom needs. San Francisco, California, tries to solve this problem through their "Market Basket" plan. Principals choose the material and equipment for their schools. They are shown reading materials from a wide variety of publishers and are asked to consult with their teachers on what would be most beneficial in the classrooms. This program is called the "Market Basket" approach because all the teachers have the opportunity to pick and choose. The principal then orders materials according to the amount of money that is available to him.*

Another interesting development is that some school districts hire their own teachers and reading consultants to write and publish materials that are especially suitable for the population in that school district. In Sarasota County, Florida, for example, a diagnostic reading test was developed by the faculty. The test was given to the students in the county and then county norms were established. Many detailed activities for analyzing reading problems and a course of study were prepared by the reading faculty for use by the classroom teachers. The course of study offers suggestions for helping students who need it in specific areas covered by the test. Richmond, California, not only wrote its own study guide for corrective reading in the classroom but also developed sample exercises to be used by the classroom teacher for specific skill development.

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*Descriptions of programs and activities in the schools are taken from the Austin and Smith study of Title I reading programs (1967), a report by the President's Advisory Council on Education, and from on-site visitations by the authors.

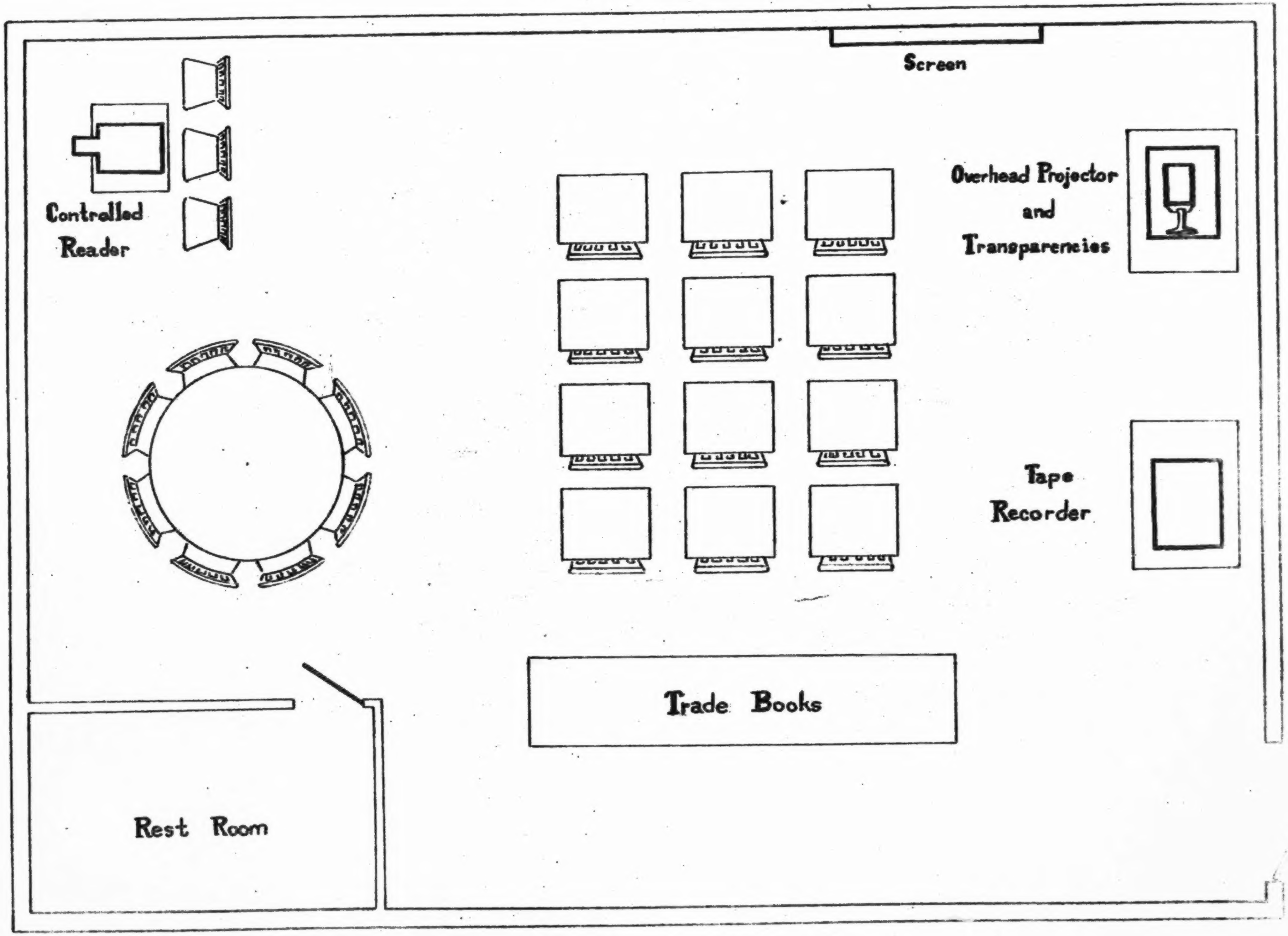
Rearranging Classroom Desks

Some administrators feel that in order to bring about diagnosis and correction of reading difficulties in the classroom, the physical arrangement of the classroom must first be changed. Changing desk arrangements alone may make a teacher more conscious of individuals and individual activity, and so the diagnosis and correction take place.

One of the simpler arrangements for handling individual problems is the inclusion of a listening post in the classroom so that the teacher can tape an individual exercise, with specific directions for a child or small group of children, and then have them listen and respond to this tape through headphone sets. Santa Maria, California, is one of many cities where this is done. There, one tape recorder and phonograph can be plugged into a unit containing twelve headsets. The equipment sits on a utility cart for mobility and can be moved from one corner of the room to another.

A more elaborate example of rearranging the classroom for specific corrective activities can be seen in the classrooms of Pinellas County, Florida. Four different areas are set up for different kinds of instruction. Different kinds of instruction can be given simultaneously. Pinellas County uses a tape recording area, a controlled reader area, an overhead projector area, and a library area. The diagram below indicates the arrangement.

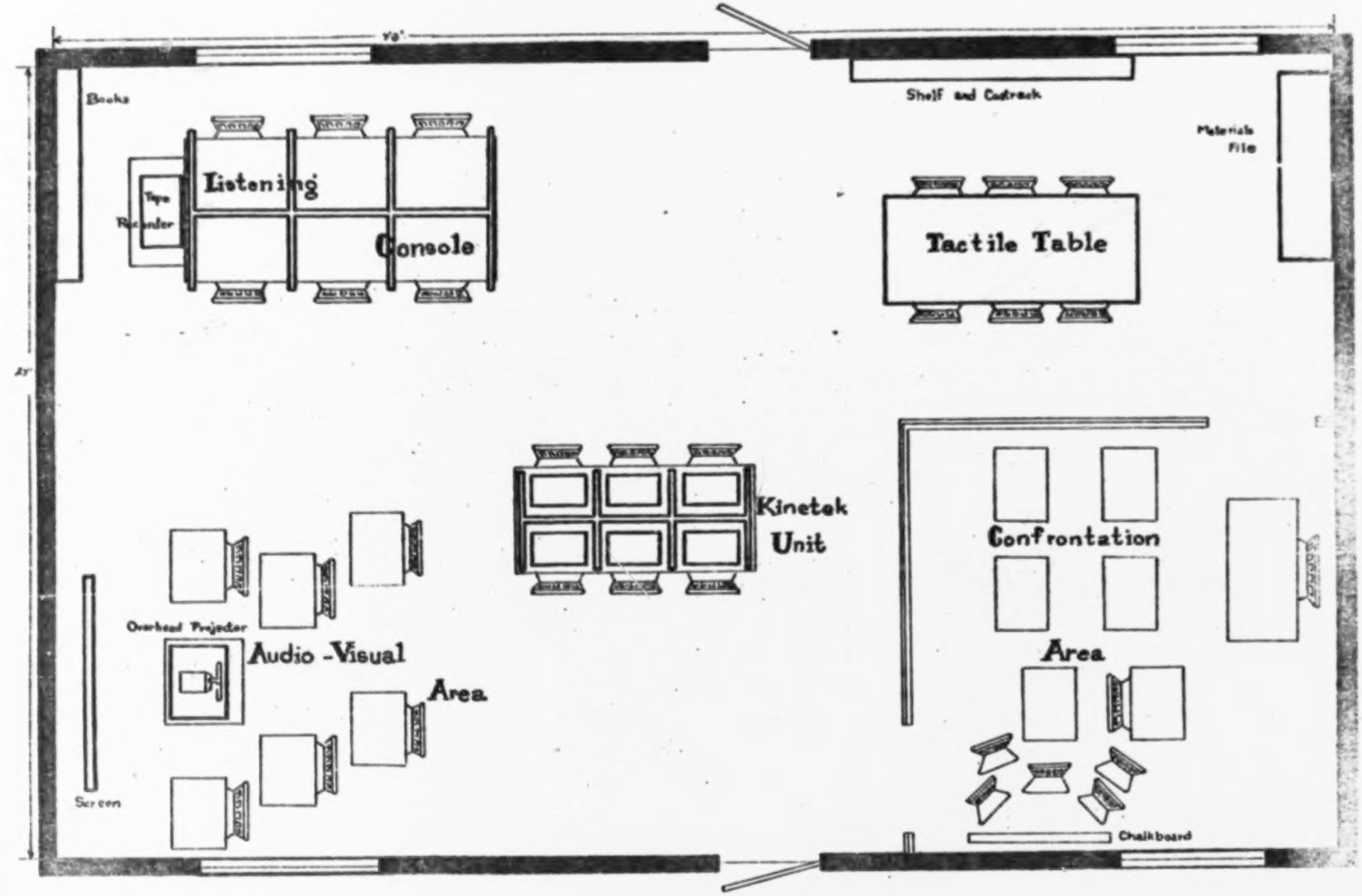
Diagram of Pinellas Co. Classroom


Screen
Controlled Reader
Overhead Projector and Transparencies
Tape Recorder
Trade Books
Rest Room

Pinellas County, Florida

In Youngstown, Ohio, another approach to reorganizing the classroom provides for five different areas of instruction within the same classroom. This approach, however, requires the use of a teacher aide or teacher assistant in order for the five areas to operate successfully. There is a 12 by 12 glass-enclosed area called the confrontation area in which the teacher can instruct a small group of students. The room is also equipped with a kinesthetic unit--a compartmentalized table housing six standard typewriters; a tactile table--a 3 by 6 table for six students who need sensory experiences such as puzzles or manipulative games; a listening console with headphones--to develop specific listening skills through the use of specially prepared tapes; an audio-visual area--containing an overhead projector, filmstrip projector, and a screen. These areas are used for a variety of instructional and motivational purposes. The diagram below illustrates how the various parts of the room are put together.

Youngstown, Ohio Classroom Diagram


Books
Tape Recorder
Listening Console
Shelf and Coatrack
Materials File
Tactile Table
Kinetek Unit
Confrontation Area
Overhead Projector
Audio-Visual Area
Screen
Chalkboard

Youngstown, Ohio

Many school districts have given the classroom teacher the opportunity to correct reading problems by offering them additional help. These programs may have been initiated under the concept of lowering the teacher=pupil ratio and thus giving the child more frequent adult contact and direction. This approach works well where teachers have been guided in the use of an assistant and consequently know how to handle the additional person in the classroom.

New personnel may range in formal school training from volunteers recruited from the community to highly trained reading specialists and consultants. The addition of good personnel can be a great benefit to the classroom teacher and to the students. The specific duties or obligations of these teacher aides vary greatly. The teacher aide, whether full- or part-time, can relieve the teacher of many routine tasks, including some tasks that are directly associated with instruction. Santa Maria, California, hired teacher aides for every elementary classroom. Each aide worked two hours a day in the school. The duties of these aides varied from school to school, but their primary purpose was to relieve the teacher of clerical duties. Some of the teachers had the aides listen to children read and also read some stories to the children.

Some school districts use teacher aides as instructional assistants. In Youngstown, Ohio, the teacher sets up a plan for each of the pupils in the classroom, and the teacher aide carries out some sections of the lesson plan of each child. The aide gives the child directions as he prepares to write his own story, or sets up a flash card game so he can practice his vocabulary, or puts on appropriate tapes and gives the child the worksheet he needs in order to follow along.

Some school districts have hired highly qualified help to provide guidance for the classroom teacher. Teachers should take advantage of the expertise of the reading consultants or reading resource person in order to find out what diagnostic and corrective techniques are available. Some school systems like Cincinnati, Ohio, Kansas City, Missouri, and Detroit, Michigan, have one reading resource teacher for every inner-city school. Teachers are free to ask the resource teacher to acquaint them with materials, to demonstrate how to handle a small group of children having specific reading problems, to come into the classroom and diagnose a child who is having difficulty, to take a child privately for diagnosis, to plan a program of treatment to be carried out in the classroom, and to demonstrate a variety of techniques for treatment of children with some of the minor reading problems that the classroom teacher is able to treat. Other school systems have similar resource teachers, but share them among two or more schools. Los Angeles, California, and Cleveland, Ohio, operate on a shared basis. The teacher should keep in mind that the resource teacher is available for his benefit and the benefit of the students, and he should feel free to have that teacher come in any time or come in often to help out.

Another type of classroom modification is the addition of teachers hired specifically to roam from room to room to do corrective reading. One form of this roaming teacher can be found in Oakland, California, and Denver, Colorado, where they have "swing" teachers. In Oakland, three teachers work in every two classrooms. Two of the teachers are regular home room teachers and the third is a "swing" teacher who spends half the day in one classroom and the other half in the second. Usually he engages in corrective reading activity with those children who need help. The swing teams find it convenient to rearrange the furniture so both of them can perform at the same time. They put up dividers, bookshelves, or racks so that one corner or even one third of the room is blocked off for the swing teacher. In New York City a slightly different arrangement has been made in order to reduce class size. There, in the primary grades, two teachers perform in one classroom.

It should be obvious that where two professional teachers are teaching separately in the same classroom, some rearranging of classroom structure is necessary. Teachers have used their ingenuity in creating small group confrontation areas as well as large group and general work areas. Most corrective activities take place in small groups in what is known in some classrooms as the teacher's corner. The children return to a larger work area to carry out the practice activities given to them by the teacher.

Another type of reorganized class that can be quite beneficial for correcting reading problems is the non-graded arrangement. In Portsmouth, Virginia, a non-graded program uses reading as one of the key elements to determine progress. A series of tasks in reading must be accomplished by each student. When a student experiences difficulty, the teacher becomes aware rather quickly of the difficulty because of the specifically defined tasks. Corrective measures can be administered without too much difficulty. The need for individualized small group instruction is evident in this type of program, and organizational arrangements within the classroom must be made in order to accomplish it. There is no set pattern for classroom organization in the Portsmouth program except that small-group activity is promoted in in-service training programs and is pretty well assured in the classroom, for the classroom teacher is given one dozen each of three different basic tests. This makes whole-group instruction from one textbook rather difficult. The variety of texts also recognizes the fact that within the series of tasks to be accomplished there will still be considerable variance on the part of students.

Flint, Michigan, has a non-graded approach to reading and adds this variable: A reading teacher goes from room to room on a regular schedule and works with a maximum of six children at a time, especially helping those who are in difficulty and helping the classroom teacher set up corrective activities for those who are experiencing difficulty in reading. Within a given room, however, a variety of ages will occur, since the Flint schools are arranged on an ungraded primary and an ungraded intermediate organizational plan.

At the high school level, the most frequently reported kind of corrective activity falls into two categories: 1) a reading laboratory in which children come from various classrooms and report on a regular basis to a reading teacher. (This is not typically what is meant by correction in the classroom and so does not fit the context of this book.) 2) a form of team teaching where a team of teachers uses one of their members as a corrective reading teacher. This kind of teaching can be found in Oakland, California, Denver, Colorado, and Phoenix, Arizona. In Oakland, the team consists of three teachers and an aide. One of the teachers uses almost all of his instructional time for corrective activities, and his room is especially equipped for reading activities. The teacher aid assists in the collection of data and in keeping folders and test information in order. The other two teachers, who conduct English classes both on a whole-group and small-group basis, make observations about youngsters who seem to be having difficulty, and they participate in the recommendation and survey testing of the children in their class who may benefit from corrective activity in reading.

In Phoenix, three large multi-use rooms were remodeled to form a language learning center. The center contains room for four English classes, four reading classes, and a central office.

Diagram of Phoenix language learning center

The reading classrooms are equipped with materials for diagnosing reading deficiencies, for teaching reading competencies with a wide variety of approaches and motivational devices, tape recorders, record players, and overhead projectors. Since four English classes and four reading classes meet around this learning center during each period of the day, a student may be moved from group to group at any time according to his particular needs. This regrouping of students is accomplished on the basis of observation by the eight teachers involved in the program. The eight teachers meet as a team, not only to plan general instructional strategy but also to discuss the ways that the English teachers and the reading teachers can work cooperatively to give the entire group of students the best learning experience. Once again, each teacher is conscious of possible reading problems so that corrective techniques can be applied almost immediately.

Stimulating Poor High School Readers

Programs to improve reading in high schools are less frequent than are elementary programs. This is particularly true of classroom programs. One reason for this is that secondary teachers often have limited, if any, training or experience in teaching reading skills. Consequently, they may not be able either to recognize or correct reading skill difficulties in their students. They may not be able to determine students' reading levels or to differentiate between the levels at which students read and the level of reading required for mastery of subject amea materials.

Fortunately, this situation is slowly changing. Increased community interest in reading programs and increased availability of funds to finance them have made more secondary programs possible. Secondary teachers have become aware of the need for reading instruction in their classrooms and are experimenting with a number of new ideas for building reading skills. Many secondary teachers are taking courses which enable them to deal with the reading difficulties of their students.

San Francisco has made a concerted attempt to get subject-matter teachers in high schools interested in the problems of reading. For example, history teachers in one project have half of their classes with students who are poor readers. The subject is still history but new techniques are used. One class, for instance, might have a teacher-devised crossword puzzle on a film they have just seen about the American Revolution. Finding commercial materials easy enough for the students to read is frequently a problem.

In a Los Angeles project, junior high school students who are poor readers --in this case defined as two years below grade level in reading--are in a core program where they are taught reading, math, and social studies by teachers who have had training in reading. Classes are kept small and many audio-visual devices are used to capture the students' interests. Since material was found to be scarce for such a project, the teachers have developed games, slides, pictures for overhead projectors, and tapes to teach their own subjects to the poor readers.

Sometimes a very simple idea works. A seventh-grade teacher in Tulsa, Oklahoma, accidentally stumbled on an answer to the dilemma of whether children are poor readers because they don't read or whether they don't read because they are poor readers. The teacher used a proverb one day to illustrate something she was talking about. The students suggested they look for other proverbs. Bringing in newspaper clippings and using stories they heard on the radio or television, the students showed great ingenuity in using old proverbs to talk about current events. The teacher thought the enthusiasm would last about a week but the students never tired of it. An immediate result was increased use of oral language in class which, in turn, led to more reading.

The Reading Aids Program in San Bernardino, California, is based on the premise that every teacher is responsible, in some measure, for the teaching of reading. Knowing that junior high school teachers have little training in the teaching of reading, kits were prepared for each of ten subject areas. The kits, with detailed instructions on their use, include tapes, acetates, worksheets, and evaluation sheets. Subject matter of the ten kits is related to classroom instruction and deals with such topics as vocabulary, meaningful reading, dictionary usage, study skills, and word analysis skills. The assumption is that the teacher knows the subject matter but now how to present it for poor readers. The materials in the kit are designed to help with the presentation. Nine teachers worked for one summer to prepare the ten kits.

Several schools like Cleveland, Ohio, have programs to discourage high school students from dropping out. One way of doing this is to place reading instruction in a large time bloc with social studies in which part of the time is spent in reading skills instruction and part in studying multi=

level content materials especially selected for the program. The content materials are vocationally oriented, giving students information about occupations and helping them realize how to fit their interests and abilities into possible occupational areas. Reading instruction deals with skill building, emphasizing the need for basic skill masteryas a preface to vocational success.

In those schools where there is a school library, the librarian can be of great help to the classroom teacher in providing books and other supplementary materials that will capitalize on the interests of the students. In some cities, the public libraries will also help.

Working With Individuals to Correct Reading Problems

Program structures often give the impression that most of the corrective activity can be accomplished with large or small groups. To some extent this is true, for classroom correction is aimed at identifying the gross skill deficiencies of children and of making efficient use of groups where that is possible in order to correct deficiency. Increasing emphasis, however, is being placed upon individual attention to even within groups it is imperative that a teacher develop an individual profile for those who are having difficulty. We have discovered some highly successful ways of organizing for individual correction and are going to report those techniques in the following paragraph.

An Approach to Individual Correction

In order to correct the gross skill deficiencies of a reader, the classroom teacher must be aware of his reading levels, his interests and his personal adjustments. Informal reading inventories, standardized survey and diagnostic tests are commonly used methods for determining reading levels. Interests and personal adjustment characteristics can be discovered by observing children during class activities, by interviewing them, and by asking them to complete interest inventories. The child's self-esteem, so often damaged by failure in reading, improves with his recognition that the teacher has set up an individual program for him.

Planning Structure and Organization of Daily Program

Usually, several children in the classroom will be involved in the corrective program on a rather regular basis. It is good for the teacher to set up routines for these children and for any others who may become involved in corrective activity on an occasional basis. Once the teacher has decided who is going to participate in the corrective reading program, he will make the necessary classroom and time adjustments to carry out the program. Here are some hints for scheduling that might be helpful:

1. Include a planning period with the children each day. During this time the planning serves a dual purpose. It motivates the children--entices them to the activities which lie ahead--and it also informs the class as a whole of the activities for which to prepare. Included in this planning period should be--

a) discussion of who needs to select new materials and when they will do it. It is during this time that the teacher can show new materials, activities, books, magazines, etc.

b) discussion and planning of who will be working alone and with others--so the room can properly be arranged and supplies provided. Plan independent reading activities.

c) discussion and solving (if possible) of any pertinent problems concerning routine--as problems with traffic around book shelves, etc.

d) arrangements for conferences, consultations, and individual assignments. Following this planning, each child should know exactly what he is to do during the reading period. Activities can be listed on a chart for easy review.

2. A sharing period may be included. Some teachers find it quite helpful to have problem readers very briefly discuss what they have learned or what they have [illegible] during the previous work session. The idea behind

that is to let all problem readers know that they are not the only ones having trouble. The teacher may want to schedule this once a week.

3. A block of time must be allotted for the self-selection of books. The purpose of this self-selection process is again to emphasize the individuality of the corrective program. Students may have some time during corrective activity to work independently while the teacher holds conferences with others or they may simply use the self-selected books during other times of the day. An important factor in the self-selection period, however, is to have a good number of books available with reading levels at which students can read independently.

4. An evaluation period or summary period should be provided so that the children and the teachers can record their daily progress in their own files. This also provides the opportunity to identify future needs and perhaps to informally appraise the activities for that day.

Planning, for and during, all these periods is essential to alleviate many behavioral problems that could arise. The exact character and nature of the teaching schedule, however, will depend entirely upon the needs of the children and the purposes of instruction.

Conferences

Individual conferences with each youngster are the high points in the corrective reading program. A one-to-one relationship of teacher and child is the best way to meet individual differences.

Conferences can be initiated in the first year, using an individualized language experience story approach for a beginning. As the children begin to read books, conferences can be used to take a representative sample of the child's reading. These sessions should be utilized also for individual instruction. The ways of organizing these sessions are numerous. Yet there are some general principles and procedures which can be followed for effective conferences.

Establish a time limit--not necessarily for rigid enforcement, but as a general goal for the teacher. Lengthy comprehensive conferences might be necessary at first to help initiate the program. An often suggested time limit is from 3 to 10 minutes, averaging 5 minutes per child. Some conferences will demand more time however, so this is only a general figure.

Often, there will be youngsters who might confer with the teacher daily, while others might only require four or five conferences per month.

The conferences can be on a voluntary basis, with the youngsters signing up on a schedule for their time, or they can be informally arranged: "Who needs to see me today?" They can also be set up on a routine basis, using an established cycle of conferences which rotates.

Teachers and children can schedule their conferences during the planning period or, if a sign-up sheet is provided, anytime during the day.

The conference with individual children should be relaxed, yet purposeful. This is a time to gain information, share, engage in personalized teaching, evaluate and plan for the next step in reading. It should be a warm, intimate time for the teacher and the child.

During the conference the teacher should--

1. discuss with the child the choice of books being read.
2. discover the child's feelings toward the book.
3. hear the child read orally.
4. evaluate and work on deriving word meanings.
5. evaluate word attack skills and work on those needing improvement.
6. work on development of specific skills.
7. check on children's understanding of specific passages or sections of the book.
8. make assignments or plans to develop a specific skill.
9. make assignments or plans to reinforce a specific skill.
10. guide the child in selecting his next book.

The individual conference should leave the child eager and ready for the next conference. Praise or some positive comment concerning the child's progress should be included, especially at the end of the conference.

Occasionally, it might be convenient or appropriate to group from two to five children together. This might be done if a few students read the same book at the same time. Ideas and interpretations can be shared in a group conference arrangement. Some teachers suggest a small group conference plan for primary children. In this arrangement, the children gather around the teacher, each reading his own self-selected book at his own rate. One child at a time from this group then receives individual reading guidance from the teacher for a few minutes. That child becomes a member of the group again while the teacher gives her attention to another member of the same group for a short period of time. This continues until everyone in the group has conferred with the teacher or until the reading period is over. The children may begin as a group all at the same time or may voluntarily come and go from the group.

Record Keeping

Record keeping is an important part of any instructional program. In a classroom correction program, where many activities go on at one time, it becomes especially important if the program is to run smoothly and if children's needs are to be served. Both teacher and children can be involved in this task with the teacher concentrating on evaluation of progress and needs and the children concentrating on recording tasks completed.

The teacher should keep detailed records which will give him a general picture of the child, his interests, abilities, and attitudes. This would include the results of mental tests, reading tests of achievement and capacity, and results of oral reading tests. The physical and mental health of a child should also be noted. Cumulative record information such as the child's interests, strengths, and limitations is helpful as well. In this more specific record, approaches and techniques found to be effective when working with the youngster should be recorded along with notations regarding specific needs and types of help needed and given.

Less formal records might include checksheets of dates when individual conferences are held, summaries of needs of individuals as shown through conferences or through observation during class activities, and notations of general class needs.

A checklist of conference dates might contain a lust of children in the class and notations of dates on which conferences are held.

Conference Schedule

Name	Conference Number							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Aaron, John	9/21	4/28						
2. Harris, June	9/22	9/25	9/29					
3. Smith, Regina								

A glance at such a record will help the teacher plan individual conferences and will give him an idea of the amount of time he needs to spend in conferences in a given day or week.

The teacher is able to, and should, take careful notes during an individual conference. The record keeping system used by the teacher should be simple yet functional--recording the overall skills, attitudes, and understandings of the child. Record cards, check lists, or a looseleaf notebook can be used effectively. Notes recorded are valuable in planning for the next conference and for group work. The teacher might use a form such as that reproduced below for keeping track of progress and further need.

Name					
Book Title	Grade Level	Skill Development	Analysis Difficulty	Ability	Assignment

After conferences have been held it is often helpful to go back over the notes recorded and summarize the needs revealed. This summary could take a form like the following:

Group work with:

Initial consonants	**Oral Reading**
1.	**1.**
2.	**2.**
3.	**3.**
4.	**4.**

Individual work:

1. **J. Jones--reading for details**
2.
3.
4.

Regardless of the particular forms used in record keeping, it is advisable that the procedures be kept as simple as possible. Using a code or a personal shorthand also helps in recording during the conference. The records need not only note reading skills or needs. Areas such as spelling or science may be generally noted as a result of a conference as well.

Record Keeping by the Child

The records that each child keeps enables him to follow his own reading progress. The youngsters readily respond to this responsibility and their records prove to be a valuable aid during individual conferences as they provide the teacher with insight into each child's reading pattern.

Record keeping must not be overemphasized; however, the children should record every book they read in their own personal files. Simplicity is the

key in children's records. They should not be so demanding that a child would prefer not to read, yet they should allow for personal reactions. Some authorities suggest that the forms of children's records be changed frequently. Their records for the most part should record what and how many books were read and the specific skill tasks they have completed.

Ways for children to record their reading are many and varied. Some suggestions are--

1. Make scrapbooks of illustrations and summaries of stories.
2. Make charts displaying various types of material read.
3. Make a "collection box" of "souvenirs" from good stories--as new words learned, funny incidents, etc.
4. Make charts which would evaluate the stories read according to criteria set by the class.
5. At the beginning of a program, use a weekly reading survey in which the child accounts for the number of pages read each day, the approximate amount of time spent browsing, reading books, newspapers, etc. This helps "time wasters" get into the reading habit.
6. Put each child's name on a divider in a file box. Cards are available with categories of books listed on them (fiction,history, science, biography, humor, animal stories, poetry, newspaper, magazine, etc.) As the child completes a book he fills out the card with the name of book, author, date finished, identification of important characters, and a sentence or two about the plot, new words and meanings. The card is filed behind his divider.

Name Date Fiction

Title:

Author:

Main characters:

Summary:

If preferred, summaries of this type could be done on record sheets for inclusion in a looseleaf folder.

Skill Development

The success of a youngster learning to read depends primarily on how effectively he learns the essential reading skills. The teaching of skills in the primary grades is not, however, the main goal. The purpose of teaching skills is to help the child read better and enjoy reading. The extent to which youngsters read on their own, independently, indicates the success of instruction.

Skill getting is an internal, active, and individual process. The proecure involves meeting the skill, learning what it is and does, practicing the skill by performing it, succeeding, or further correcting the skill until success is evidenced.

The teaching of skills should not be isolated from the reading act itself. For this reason most of the skill instruction in individualized reading is handled in the individual conferences when the child shows a need for it. Reading specialists differ in their opinions of the proper sequence of skill development. By checking through various basal textbook manuals a teacher can discover the variety of these opinions. It might be helpful, though, for the teacher to have at least one basal textbook manual on hand to use as a guide in developing skills. A little further on is a list of specific reading skills and sample activities for their development.

It is advisable to keep a checklist in the records of each child so that as a skill is mastered, the teacher can check it off the list and proceed to others.

Skill Evaluation

In evaluating whether skills have been acquired, and the progress of the child, it is necessary to gain as much information as possible prior to making any judgment. Information may be gained in many ways--formally

The methods by which children are evaluated can be similar to those used in other reading programs. They include analysis of--

1. informal and standardized test results
2. checklist of skills
3. inventories of the child's needs
4. child's oral reading
5. teacher observations of child's attitudes, interests, and purposes for reading, and how much the child reads
6. teacher-pupil conference records
7. child's self-evaluation
8. child's independent reading record.
9. tape recordings of the child's reading early in the year as compared to subsequent tapes noting progress.

Word Attack Skills Checklist

Name ____________________

Grade ____________________ Age ____________ Date ____________________

	Mastery		
Skill	Poor	Average	Good
1. Recognition of basic sight vocabulary			
2. Ability to sound out new words			
a. recognition of consonant sounds			
b. recognition of vowel sounds			
c. knowledge of syllabication			
3. Ability to analyze word structure			
a. understanding of syllabication			
b. understanding of root words			
c. understanding of prefixes			
d. understanding of suffixes			
4. Ability to use context clues			
5. Ability to supply synonyms and antonyms			
6. Ability to use a dictionary			

Comprehension Skills Checklist

Name ______________________________

Grade ___________________________ Age ______________ Date ___________

	Mastery		
Skill	Poor	Average	Good
1. Ability to understand meaning			
a. word			
b. sentence			
c. paragraph			
2. Ability to recall main idea			
3. Ability to give supporting ideas			
4. Ability to retell a story in sequence			
5. Ability to draw conclusions from given facts.			
6. Ability to evaluate material read			
7. Ability to relate reading to experience			
8. Ability to use sources of information			
a. table of contents			
b. dictionary			
c. maps			
d. index			
9. Ability to make comparisons between two or more versions of a story			

Oral Reading Checklist

Name ____________________________________

Grade _______________ Age _____________ Date ____________

	Mastery		
Skill	Poor	Average	Good
1. Good reading posture			
2. Ability to utilize word attack skills			
a. sounding out new words			
b. pronouncing words correctly			
c. using structural parts			
d. using combined methods of word attack			
3. Ability to phrase meaningfully			
4. Ability to recognize and use punctuation symbols			
5. Ability to identify main ideas			
6. Ability to read fluently and enunciate clearly			
7. Ability to convey meaning and feeling to listeners			

Conclusion

An individualized corrective reading program is flexible by nature. There is no step-by-step program fixed for each school day. Each child is an individual, with individual problems, and requires an individualized method of instruction. Variety in both methods and materials is inherent in this personalized plan. The variety of ideas presented here serves to supplement the ideas that an individual teacher may have. The teacher should consider this as a flexible guide that can be adapted to any system of reading instruction. Hopefully, it will stimulate other methods to achieve the goal of helping all children learn to read and to enjoy their reading experiences.

IV--CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES FOR CORRECTING SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

Once the teacher has identified a specific reading problem and has organized his classroom so that he can conduct corrective activities, all that is left to do is to treat the problem. As has been mentioned previously, adequate treatment demands an adequate supply of materials, the application of appropriate corrective techniques, and, naturally, that which underlies all of it, appropriate training for the teacher.

Teachers have many handicaps when it comes to reading instruction. First of all, their own training may have been inadequate. Then, too often, they are given the job without being given the tools. Materials are skimpy, classes are crowded, help is scarce, and administrators do not always supply the needed support. Reading consultants sometimes can be seen by appointment only, so that the moment when specific help is needed slips past. However, ways are being found to face these specific handicaps.

Teacher Preparation

Most graduates in elementary education have had more training in teaching music, art, and physical education than they have had in the teaching of reading (Austin, 1961, p.23). Those destined to be secondary school teachers might very well have had no training in the teaching of reading or even in the recognition of reading difficulties.

This may be surprising in view of the fact that elementary school teachers spend a great deal of time in the teaching of reading, and secondary school teachers also are vitally concerned with reading in various content areas. These realities of deficiency must be faced by adjusting pre-service and in-service training.

To make up for deficiencies in background, teachers have several avenues open--course work, reading professional books, experience in a reading lab or clinic, and in-service training. More and more schools are providing in-service training and some are even paying teachers by means of released time during the school day or by giving them additional money for participating in in-service training after school or on Saturdays. Teachers and teacher organizations ought to pursue ways of obtaining needed in-service experience so that a more effective job in correction of reading problems can be accomplished.

In communities with colleges, school systems may often work out with college authorities special courses useful to teachers of reading. In San Diego, California, several college level courses have been devised to help with the teaching of reading. Some of them are given right in the public schools so the teachers do not have far to travel. Such courses can be tailored to meet the problems of a specific school or a specific district if that is desirable. For example, if a school has a large proportion of children for whom English is a second language, the course could concentrate on how to teach reading to them. Evidently, there are correction problems that continue throughout the teaching process of this group of children.

Those communities which do not have colleges can often host off-campus courses from state universities or teachers colleges. This is especially beneficial where teachers can commute from other towns or school districts. In this way, teachers from a number of school systems can benefit from courses in teaching reading which, otherwise, would be out of their reach.

In most instances, however, the school system will want to devise training programs that are indigenous to the school district. This means a special curriculum for in-service training programs can be developed by a committee of teachers and supervisors or by the supervisory staff. Both local school people and outside consultants can then present demonstrations and lead discussions that will arrive at the kind of training and experience desirable. With specific local goals in mind, schools often conduct extended in-service programs on Saturdays or during the summer. In Terre Haute, Indiana, teachers may attend evening or Saturday workship sessions on the educational problems of disadvantaged children. Teachers in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, attend a concentrated series of weekly meetings in the spring and a six-week summer workshop. Focus on the program is on the upgrading of all reading instruction, particularly in schools which have many children from disadvantaged homes. The specific techniques demonstrated illustrate where problems are likely to arise in the teaching of reading and what the specific techniques are that will be beneficial in overcoming those problems.

Interest in in-service training of the kind mentioned above can be increased by offering college credit. Kenmore, New York, has an in-service program in which elementary teachers attend a series of nine evening meetings during a semester and receive one university credit. Lectures by well-known reading specialists are supplemented by discussions in individual schools in the system. Teachers do personal projects concerned with methods used in correcting reading problems in their own classrooms. Their ideas, summaries of the meetings, and lists of materials recommended for classroom use are collected in an idea exchange booklet which is distributed to all who complete the course.

Relieving teachers of classroom duties for in-service training is a third means of planning successful programs. Buffalo, New York, maintains a Reading Center for the purpose of improving the teaching of reading through in-service training. The Center's staff of reading consultants conducts three types of in-service programs at the Center, a trainee program, workshops, and demonstrations. The trainee program is the most intensive. Each school term four classroom teachers become trainees, attending lectures and discussion sections and observing the administration of reading analysis. After several weeks of training the trainees take over the teaching of small groups of children who come to the Center for corrective work. At the end of the term the trainees return to their classrooms. Workshops, given after school one day a week for five weeks, are conducted at the Center for beginning and experienced teachers at different levels. All district public school teachers are invited. Demonstration classes are taught by Center consultants. Each term, two elementary classes spend every morning at the Center for four weeks. The trainees and other district teachers observe these classes. The consultant has a conference with observers preceeding and following the observations.

Dougherty County, Georgia, is another school system which releases teachers from classroom duties for in-service training in reading. Each of fourteen target schools releases one teacher at a time for six-month training sessions at the county's Reading Clinic in Albany. The first four to six weeks are spent in discussion with psychologists, professors, an optometrist, and the clinicians, and in preparing for case work. Throughout the training the theory and practice of diagnosis and remedial instruction are well integrated. After the initial training, teachers are assigned split day schedules, half working mornings and half afternoons with corrective and remedial cases. The teachers spend the other half day in their respective schools teaching developmental and remedial reading classes and acting as resource teachers.

Teachers may also use some of the excellent books that are available on corrective reading in the classroom, such as Diagnostic Teaching of Reading by Ruth Strang; The Teachers Guide for Remedial Reading by Kottmeyer; Corrective and Remedial Teaching by Otto and McMenemy. Reading specialists and consultants can be of help to teachers and administrators in finding and recommending especially helpful books for special needs. It might be well for groups of teachers interested in this problem to group themselves into discussion meetings in order to encourage each other to read in this area.

All of these suggestions about in-service training and personal development are offered merely as stimulants or ideas to help the classroom teacher in looking for ways to improve his knowledge and practice of corrective reading. Evidently, there are other ways and other means all of which are aimed at getting at specific problems with specific techniques for overcoming those problems.

Specific Reading Skills

Successful techniques for correcting reading difficulty appear to have three common characteristics:

1. Teachers have definite goals of instruction in mind.
2. Reading is associated with pupil experience.
3. Planned sequential skill development is provided.

Corrective techniques vary widely. It should also be said that no good teacher uses only one in isolation. A multiple approach to teaching reading benefits the students with their varying abilities and varying styles of learning.

The goals that a teacher sets up may be related to word recognition, such as identifying words that begin with the consonant digraph ch, or they may be related to such less easily measured things as lack of experience, lack of motivation to learn, or lack of concepts to deal with the reading at hand.

One of the techniques that classroom teachers in growing numbers are using, especially where there is evidence of some cultural disadvantagement, is a technique known as the language experience approach. This technique takes advantage of what the child knows in order to get him to talk and then to interest him in reading about what has already captured his interest.

Probably the simplest form of language experience is the show-and-tell period, widely used in the elementary schools. The child brings something to class that he has found or seen and tells the class about it. The purpose is two-fold; to make the child more observant, and to get him talking in a way that will interest his peers. The class ordinarily will join in a discussion of the subjects brought up. For many children, a show-and= tell experience will be the first time they have had an audience interested in what they have to say. They find out that language is a tool to capture the attention of others, that it is something useful.

Children from limited or deprived backgrounds--and this, by no means, describes only the poor--have little to talk about. The field trip has become a prime instrument to extend the language experiences of these children.

Field trips require a great deal of planning if they are to be more than outings. San Francisco is an example of a school system that has made the field trip a true teaching device.

Sites for field trips are carefully chosen to fit into the curriculum, with one class concentrating on becoming acquainted with the city, another with occupational possibilities, another with cultural offerings, and still another with nature study. Teachers, administrators, and reading specialists plan the trips by visiting selected sites ahead of the children. They prepare for the visits by securing reinforcement materials from the audio-visual department and school library, and by arranging for resource speakers to tell children more about the places to be visited. Children are allowed to express choices of places they want to visit and follow up their field trips with essays, plays, language experience charts, or scrapbooks telling of their experiences. Parents are invited to accompany children on the field trips in an effort to enlist their interest in their children's learning activities. This also provides the teacher with further supervision for the group and is often ecucational for the parents as well as for the children.

There is little doubt that the San Francisco field trips and others like them are effective. The children acquire a common set of experiences about which they can converse. They become more aware of things around them as they develop observational powers. Vocabularies grow. Use of color, details and arrangement in art increases. Social skills and attitudes improve.

Activities to Teach Specific Reading Skills

Classroom teachers often want to know how to correct a specific skill. An essential feature in that kind of specific diagnosis and correction is to have established in one's mind a rather precise sequence of reading skills against which a student may be evaluated, and through which the teacher can encourage the student to proceed. A sample of such a list of skills is given below.

PERCEPTUAL READING SKILLS

Auditory Skills
1. matching rhyming words
2. identifying consonant sounds
3. identifying vowel sounds
4. hearing word variants
5. recognizing syllable length
6. listening for accent

Visual Skills
1. noticing likenesses and differences
2. noticing differences in upper and lower case and between letters
3. increasing eye-span
4. developing spacial discrimination

Motor Skills
1. developing left-right eye movement
2. developing hand-eye coordination
3. developing motor awareness and coordination
4. focusing

WORD IDENTIFICATION SKILLS

Sight Vocabulary
Phonic Analysis Skills

1. recognizing consonant sounds
2. recognizing consonant blends
3. recognizing consonant digraphs
4. recognizing vowel sounds
5. recognizing vowel diphthongs
6. recognizing vowel digraphs

Structural Analysis Skills

1. recognizing affixes
2. recognizing compound words
3. recognizing roots
4. recognizing contractions

Context Clue Skills

1. using definition clues
2. using experience clues
3. using comparison clues
4. using synonym clues
5. using familiar expression clues
6. using summary clues
7. using reflection of mood clues

Syllabication Skills

1. recognizing syllables
2. using syllabication generalizations
3. recognizing accent

COMPREHENSION SKILLS

1. matching words and pictures
2. recognizing meaningful phonograms
3. matching definitions and word symbols
4. recognizing antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms
5. seeing literal and interpretive meanings
6. using context clues
7. recognizing meaning in larger units--sentencd, passage, chapter
8. recognizing main idea and supporting detail
9. recognizing sequence
10. making generalizations and conclusions
11. following directions

COMPREHENSION RATE

1. using correct left-right eye movement
2. using little or no regression
3. using little or no vocalizing or subvocalizing
4. using correct phrasing to read
5. adjusting rate to purpose
6. rapid recognition of sight vocabulary
7. using various word attack techniques meeting his own needs

ORAL READING

1. adjusting rate to purpose
2. using phrasing to read
3. using sufficient eye-voice span to read
4. using pleasing pitch and volume
5. enunciating correctly
6. pronouncing correctly
7. using punctuation correctly
8. being a relaxed reader

STUDY SKILLS

Organizational Skills
1. arranging in alphabetical order
2. interpreting diacritical marks, symbols, and abbreviations
3. using the Table of Contents
4. taking good notes
5. using the Index
6. verifying statements
7. developing a sense of sequence
8. using summarizing and outlining
9. synthesizing materials from several sources
10. organizing and reporting information

Library Skills
1. knowing the arrangement of the library
2. using the card catalogue
e . using the vertical files
4. using the dictionary and glossary
5. using the encyclopedia
6. using the atlas
7. using the Reader's Guide

Interpretation Skills
1. using pictures for information
2. interpreting graphs
3. interpreting diagrams
4. using time lines
5. interpreting maps

INTERPRETATION AND APPRECIATION READING SKILLS

1. inferring and concluding
2. recognizing the author's purpose
3. recognizing the difference between fact and opinion
4. recognizing the mood of the story
5. recognizing figurative language
6. seeing cause and effect relationships
7. knowing literary styles

In many instances, teachers will have to create their own exercises in order to give individual instruction in a specific skill. It would not be fair, however, to expect the teacher to create exercises for all students, and every teacher should realize that many fine instructional materials are available in most of these areas. Given below are some samples of the kinds of activities that can be used to teach some of the specific skills listed above. For a more complete picture of the kinds of things that can be done, refer to the third book in the target series entitled Treating Reading Disabilities--The Reading Specialist's Role (Smith, Dapper, and Carter, 1969).

AUDITORY SKILLS--Matching Rhyming Words

On the left side of the page, display pictures of objects which exemplify the sound being taught; on the right side, display pictures of rhyming words. The children are to draw a line to the rhyming object. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

AUDITORY SKILLS--Identifying Consonant Sounds

Each child receives a worksheet with a playground scene on it. Many objects are displayed in the picture; most of the objects start with initial consonant sounds already studied. With a red pencil, all the objects beginning with ____ are marked. With a blue pencil all the objects beginning with ____ are marked. Only two or three sounds should be tested at once; the picture can be used again to test other sounds. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

AUDITORY SKILLS--Identifying Vowel Sounds

The children are to return to their readers to skim for words that fit into the categories given by the teacher. The categories for sorting are determined by the vowel sounds the teacher wants to stress. Example: the long sound of ____, the short sound of ____, the r-controlled sound of

____. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

AUDITORY SKILLS--Recognizing Syllable Length

Give a list of mixed words containing one=, two=, and three=syllable words. The children are to unscramble the words and put them into three columns, according to the number of syllables per word. Then they are to label the columns one=, two=, and three=syllable words. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

VISUAL SKILLS--Noticing Likenesses and Differences

On a worksheet with pairs of similar and often confused words, as the teacher reads sentences the children are to underline the correct word from the pair. Example: quiet-quite, deep-dear, palace-place, throat-throne. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

VISUAL SKILLS--Developing Special Discrimination Horizontal Sequence

Display three objects in front of the children and demonstrate the naming of the first, next, and last object. Using any three objects, have them locate the first, next, and last objects from left to right. This involves procedures that generally include discussion or similar activity in a smaller group.

MOTOR SKILLS--Developing Hand-Eye Coordination

Some developmental activities which will enhance visual-motor coordination are the following: cutting, painting, pasting, tracing, finger games, coloring, model making, beat stringing, and block building. This involves procedures that generally include discussion or similar activity in a smaller group.

SIGHT VOCABULARY--Developing Sight Vocabulary

This game is played like Bingo. Words are written in columns and rows. The children cover the words pronounced by the teacher; the first child to completely cover a column or row is the winner. This involves procedures that generally include discussion or similar activity in a smaller group.

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS--Recognizing Affixes

After reviewing rules about plurals, present the children with a list of representative nouns. The children are to write the root word next to the given plural, then state in his own words the rule governing that root word and its plural. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

CONTEXT CLUBS--Using Context Clues

Present a short story of one paragraph with some words left out. The children are to read each sentence and complete it with their own words or those from a given list. The different types of context clues may be exhibited in each sentence. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

SYLLABICATION GENERALIZATIONS--Using Syllabication Generalizations

After several syllabication generalizations have been studied or reviewed present a list of words for the child to divide, have him letter the divided word with the correct rule governing its division. This diagnostic and correctional procedure is designed for an individual.

COMPREHENSION--Matching Definitions and Word Symbols

Prepare a worksheet where the children must match the word and its definition. The choice of words and definitions depends on the grade level of the group. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

COMPREHENSION--Seeing Literal and Interpretive Meanings

Prepare questions to be presented before the students read. These questions should provoke thought while reading. Some sample questions which enhance interpretation are "What did he mean by ____?";"Do you think that this should have happened?"; "What makes this a good example of ____ (some literary style)?"; "Compare these two characters."; "Which character displayed the most courage?"; and so on. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

COMPREHENSION SKILLS--Recognizing Main Idea and Supporting Detail

After the children have read the story the teacher writes sentences on the board that show main ideas and detail from the reading. Through discussion the children distinguish which are the main ideas and which are the supporting detail. Finally, each child arranges on a sheet of paper the main ideas in their proper sequence. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

COMPREHENSION--Following Directions

Present a worksheet where directions vary according to topics that were studied in each subject for the past week. The list of directions is to be completed but done in fun. Some ideas for directions are as follows:

Write the page number that tells where ants get their food. (Science)
Trace a picture of an ant. (Science)
Copy the difinition of a verb. (English)
Give an example of a verb used in a sentence. (English)
From your notebook, copy three new words learned this week in Spanish.
Draw a Pilgrim boy or girl. (Social Studies)
State three reasons why we still observe Thanksgiving. (Social Studies)
Spell correctly three words that you missed on the pretest. (Spelling)

This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

COMPREHENSION RATE--Using Little or No Regressions

Using a cover card, the child is to read from left to right across a page. As he reads, he uses a cover card to block out what has been read. This sample is a diagnostic and correctional procedure designed for an individual.

COMPREHENSION RATE--Adjusting to Purpose

Questions involving material found in the index, table of contents, and chapter headings, make good material to scan for answers. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

ORAL READING SKILLS--Enunciating Correctly

Bring attention to endings like ing, d, and t. Practice words on flashcards could be used for individual or class help:

chattering
coming
fishing
talking
stirring
falling
blowing
making
growling
pushing

brought
feed
dived
crept
spent
listened
chattered
watched
rattled
waited

quiet
slid
caught
carried
tonight
right
around
tugged
that
pulled

This involves procedures that generally include discussion or similar activity in a smaller group.

Auditory and Visual Training

Many children have auditory or visual discrimination problems which adversely affect their ability to read. The classroom teacher can recognize some of these problems by observing children's behavior in the classroom.

Poor word recognition, narrow attention span, reversals, and word-by-word reading, especially if coupled with bloodshot, swollen, or teary eyes, complaints of dizziness, blurred vision, or soreness, may be symptoms of visual difficulty. Difficulties in sound differentiation, in following spoken directions, or in classroom attentiveness may indicate hearing or auditory discrimination problems. The teacher, after observing such behavior, should make an informal diagnosis of auditory and visual discrimination and follow up with specific treatment. If diagnosis and treatment in the classroom do not prove successful, or if the problem appears too severe for classroom handling, the teacher should refer the child to a specialist for help.

Classroom diagnosis of auditory and visual discrimination problems can be done through teacher-devised tests or through formal tests. To test auditory discrimination, a teacher might ask a child to listen to a series of words (e.g., bat, bet, bit, but) and describe likenesses or differences in the words (e.g., change in middle vowel). The _Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test_ includes exercises similar to the example given and can be administered easily by the classroom teacher. In testing visual discrimination, the teacher might ask a child to choose two like figures from a series (e.g., △ □ ○ △) or ask him to reproduce a figure himself (e.g.,). This kind of exercise appears in reading readiness tests and in the _Frostig Visual Perception Test_ which, like the _Wepman_, can be administered in the classroom.

Once diagnosis of auditory or visual discrimination problems has been made, the classroom teacher can devise exercises similar to the test items to help correct problems. Such exercises should be based on diagnostic findings and should concentrate on developing skills through exercises similar to those used in diagnosis.

Given below are some general means for treating auditory and visual problems.

Many classrooms now have listening posts or corners where the children can listen to tapes or records to improve their auditory perception. The use of pictures, films, and filmstrips can be incorporated in classroom teaching to improve visual perception.

Filmstrips can be used to teach specific skills. For example, to teach time relationships, the class might be shown a single frame of a filmstrip they saw the day before. The teacher then asks the class to tell what happened just before and just after that picture.

Games can be used for both visual and auditory perception. Many of these are devised by teachers with specific goals in mind. For example, pictures are shown of various objects whose only relationship might be that they begin with the same consonant. The children who pick out the pictures and write down the words beginning with the same letter win the game.

Controlled readers are used to improve eye movements. The speed of the machine is geared to the child's ability and gradually moved up so that he is forced to use fewer eye movements in order to keep up with the story.

Many companies have now put stories on tapes. Teachers also will tell stories into tape machines and children themselves will dictate their own stories. Listening to these tapes ; and then answering questions about what they have heard will help improve listening skills.

The Language Improvement Project at the Fairlawn School in Santa Barbara, California, puts great emphasis on the development of listening skills. Listening centers have been set up in many of the classrooms. The center consists of a cart, twelve headsets, a phonograph, and a tape recorder. The cart is rolled into the classroom and is ready for use.

The Fairlawn listening centers are used in a number of ways by students:

. to listen to recorded stories from their textbooks, following along while hearing the tape

- to listen to teacher-made tapes, some of which may be to dictate instructions tor drill in specific skills
- to record their oral reading, passing along the microphone in turn and then listening to their own performances
- for group reading of a play
- to record their experiences on a field trip
- to hear their own improvement by listening to tapes made six months earlier and comparing them with tapes of the same material just made.

Teaching for Skills

Reading specialists and other resource teachers can be of help to the classroom teacher who want to concentrate on specific skills. First of all, the specialist can help the classroom teacher diagnose the reading difficulties a student is having. Then the specialist can demonstrate through teaching classroom lessons or during in-service training, how to gear instruction to specific reading problems. Not the least of the specialist's help comes from locating and demonstrating new materials and techniques.

In San Francisco, a special program is aimed at children who need help in reading. First, an informal reading inventory was devised to help teachers determine the reading probmems their students were having. A multimedia approach was instituted whereby teachers were encouraged to use newspapers, trade books, magazines, filmstrips, radio and television programs, resource speakers, records, tape recordings, and field trips in order to tune in to students' interests and motivate them to read. Listening skills were emphasized through opportunities for the exchange of verbal ideas, discussion, and reporting. Reading specialists singled out materials that would teach specific skills, such as phonics, blending, final consonants, time and space relationships, and correct use of prepositions.

Games introduce an element of fun into classroom work and are helpful in reinforcing specific skills. Both elementary and secondary students enjoy playing commercially developed word games in class. Dolch card games, such as Word Rummy, and word bingo games like Lotto provide fun and motivation for elementary schildren. Scrabble and Spill and Spell can be used effectively in secondary classrooms with some adaptation by the teacher so that groups of students can play against one another.

In addition to using commercially available games there are a number of ways in which teachers can devise game situations for classes. Very young children might find three or four word cards on their chairs when they come into class. The children use these word cards to make sentences. Variations of anagrams, where letters are used to build and change words can be effective with both elementary and secondary students. Telephoning each other on play phones can encourage the use of language as well as social skills. Elementary children can build word collections by writing each new word on a card and filing it for later use in language experience charts. Secondary students can use the same method for building specific vocabularies for content area courses. Classification can be learned by finding newspaper and magazine stories that have to do with pets, cars, sports, or whatever interests a child most. Stories in trade books that concentrate on certain sounds a child is having trouble with can be used profitably in building needed understandings and skills.

Materials and Books

Selection of books and other materials for instructional and independent reading should be done with the interests and abilities of children in mind. As commercial materials and books become more varied and more helpful, the selection task of the teacher becomes more difficult. By consulting reading coordinators and by using reference sources on children's literature, classroom teachers can become more familiar with the content and reading levels of children's books. School librarians can be of assistance by providing teachers with their sources of information on new books.

There are a number of references which list books available for individual reading programs and many of these are constantly updated to keep teachers and librarians acquainted with outstanding publications. The 1966 revision of Good Reading for Poor Readers by Spache discusses book choices for specific children and includes lists of books, workbooks, and games for use in individualized reading programs. H. W. Wilson's Children's Catalog is such a reference tool. Published annually, it gives summaries of books in all fields, estimates of their difficulty, and assessments of literary value. Another reference which, like Wilsch's Catalog, is available through school librarians, is The Horn Book Magazine. It is published bimonthly and contains reviews of outstanding children's books. Teachers can also consult such professional journals as Elementary English and the English Journal for information on new instructional materials for classroom use.

The school reading coordinator is a vital source of information on materials for use in individualized reading programs. He can investigate new materials as he receives information on them from publishers and can relay this information to classroom and special reading teachers. He can also use the results of his investigations to plan and present demonstrations of innovative materials for classroom teachers.

Still, teachers say, the commercial materials are too few; they lack realism; they don't motivate the nonreader; they are geared for girls rather than for boys; their vocabularies are too controlled (another complaint is that the vocabularies are too extensive!); the materials contain two few phonics practices; and they are unsuitable for independent reading programs. To overcome any or all of these deficiencies, teachers are creating their own materials. To surmount the problem of time to do this, teachers are sometimes released for a semester to work on a project, or they may devote a summer to the task. Most classroom teachers spend their evenings and weekends creating their own teaching materials. More sharing of materials could be done, even of teacher-created materials.

Since teachers, like everyone else, prefer the familiar, there is a tendency to hang on to familiar materials regardless of their worth. The basal readers are often the only materials a teacher will use, and even then she may ignore the accompanying teacher manual. Such resistance to change has to be overcome, either through the prodding of the reading coordinator or principal or through convincing demonstrations of materials during in-service sessions.

Further use of the audio-visual coordinator and of the school librarian can be made to supplement materials for the classroom.

Testing and Grouping

One of the difficulties in both testing and grouping is an attitudinal problem. Some teachers tend to believe that once a class is tested or grouped, that it will remain so for all time. Children, of course, do not stand still, and both testing and grouping have to be continuing processes.

Even in a homogeneous setting, all children do not read at the same level, nor do they have the same specific skill needs. But too often teachers in such a setting tend to think that grouping has been finished and think there is no further need for individualized instruction. Even a homogeneous class will have as many as four or five levels of reading ability, and individual children, at whatever level, will have specific reading problems. For these reasons teachers should create fluid groups within the classes, giving children the help they need in specific areas without consigning them to one group for all reading instruction.

Classroom teachers, aware of the fact that differences in skill abilities exist, can do much in the way of building these abilities. The first effort should be to use skill checklists, such as those shown below and those in the appendix dealing with individual differences, to single out skill weaknesses in children. Classroom observations of behavior in reading situations and of attitudes shown toward reading can be of great help in determining areas of difficulty. Formal testing of areas of difficulty discovered in daily observation and measurement can follow as needed.

Knowing what tests to use and how to use them will come only from special effort and from experience. Reading coordinators and other reading specialists in the school can help classroom teachers in finding and using standardized tests. A semester's in-service training could be planned around classroom diagnosis of reading difficulty.

Evaluation and Communication

Whatever techniques and materials are being tried, plans to evaluate them should be built into the project. Although teacher observation will be enough to sense class enthusiasm for materials and techniques, discrete skills can be tested best by before-and-after evaluations. The school's reading coordinator or principal should be involved in setting up methods of evaluation.

One way of evaluating children's progress is to use checklists, such as those below, to measure skill abilities. A careful examination of such checklists, coupled with teacher observations of class participation and results of reading tests, will give the teacher a broad base on which to evaluate progress.

Communicating with parents is essential. In some cities, the parents are actually involved in the cirriculum by serving as paid or volunteer aides or tutors. In other places, parents go along with the children on field trips. Parental use of the school library is encouraged. Parents are usually informed--or should be--when a change in reading instruction is about to be tried, or they will have only the children's garbled versions of the experiment. Student demonstrations of methods and materials at PTA meetings and other parent gatherings help show what the schools are trying to do and how they are going about it.

San Bernardino has a simple device to capture the interest of parents. The mothers and fathers are invited to the school to "hear your child on tape" or "see the pictures we took on our trip." When home visits to explain the reading program have been undertaken, one of the clearest results has been a decrease in truancy--an indication of increased parental interest in the school.

V CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Problems Remaining

With the increased recognition of the importance of reading and with the changing school clientele--especially in big cities with large numbers of public school children from disadvantaged backgrounds--the problems of teaching reading at all levels seem to be increasing rather than decreasing. Reading problems, like crime, seem to increase as methods of diagnosing and reporting improve. Better diagnostic and teaching techniques seem to reveal more problems to be handled.

Nonetheless, some of the emerging problems show a hopeful pattern and point toward solutions. For one thing, it is becoming clear that all classroom teachers have to become teachers of reading to some degree. The high school history teacher cannot teach history to nonreaders by his old methods. The fifth-grade teacher must know how to spot reading difficulties and either know how to overcome them herself or know where she can get some help for the child.

More individualized instruction is called for. Grouping solves nothing unless instructional techniques are adjusted to the needs of the reader. The glaring failure to do this is seen in ungraded classes which are identical in practice with graded classes. Individual reading programs are talked about more than they are put into operation. One of the chief problems is lack of books--a problem that can be solved with money, since the books are on the market.

New techniques and materials must be received with an open mind. Programmed instruction, for example, is just beginning to come into its own. Its use has been impeded largely by teacher resistance.

Administrators must give support and attention to the improvement of reading. It is only through them that the classroom teachers will obtain the materials they need and that the school system will hire the specialists who can construct and execute the services needed.

Finally, there has to be closer cooperation between the classroom teacher and others, such as the reading specialist, who are concerned with overcoming reading problems. It is impossible for either one to work effectively without the other.

The classroom teacher occupies the pivotal position in discovering reading difficulties, in taking steps in the classroom to overcome them, in referring children who need special help, in providing gifted readers with individualized programs to enhance their skills and hold their interest, and, ultimately, in preventing reading problems before they become critical and crippling.

Pitfalls to be Avoided

Below are presented some of the more common mistakes that classroom teachers make in estimating their personal involvement with reading difficulties in the classroom.

1. Not my job. Since a number of classroom teachers do not have specific training and are not called reading teachers, they feel that identification and correction of problems in reading do not fall to them. And, of course, in a specialized sense they are correct. Every teacher is not expected to have a specialized knowledge of the causes, diagnoses, and treatment of reading problems, but every teacher must realize that reading is the basic tool that students use and that, no matter what the subject, there are peculiar elements that demand different approaches for reading intelligently. In that sense, every teacher is a teacher of reading. The elementary teachers are more specifically concerned with reading instruction and ordinarily have some minimal background in the teaching of reading skills.

2. Over-involvement in diagnosis. Because it is easier to test and diagnose without making conclusions, some classroom teachers become entangled in diagnosing problems and never do anything about them. The classroom teacher has to deal with the reality that he does not have the

time or the tools to carry out a complete clinical diagnosis of the children in his classes. His diagnosis is a general practitioner's analysis of the gross faults that a child commits in reading, and he tries the most obvious kinds of treatments to overcome these faults.

3. Haphazard treatment. Classroom teachers often approach the treatment of reading problems in a haphazard way. Instead of asking themselves what skills a child must have in order to overcome the weakness they observe, they simply ask the child to do some practice activity that seems somewhat related to the observed weakness without trying to find out if other skills more basic and fundamental are also deficient. Then, too, some teachers proceed with a number of activities that they call corrective, not relating them to any sequence of reading skills or without evidence of progress. They simply give the child a programmed instruction book, for example, and ask him to work in it--without noting progress or without determining whether the child needs to go through all of the exercises contained in that program of materials.

4. Poor selection of materials. A teacher can't possibly recall all of the good books and practice exercises available for corrective activity. It behooves him, therefore, to select a guide for the materials that he will use in corrective activities. Perhaps a book like Spache's Good Reading for Poor Readers, or books published by the Children's Book Council, or the reviews and lists published by the Children's Library Center at the University of Chicago would be beneficial for a classroom teacher to have in ordering and selecting materials for his classroom.

5. Lack of flexibility. There is probably no greater fault in teachers' attempts to correct reading problems than lack of flexibility. If the teacher is truly going to meet the individual needs of the children he must be flexible in his organizational structure, in the materials that he uses, in the techniques, and even in the methods that he uses to teach reading.

No one method will solve the problems of every child, just as no one set of materials or technique will solve all the problems. It is necessary, therefore, for the teacher to be concerned with individual diagnosis and correction in the classroom and to be willing to make all sorts of adjustments in meeting with the child and finding appropriate materials and techniques for handling his problem.

6. Failure to make a referral. There has to come a time (with experience, it becomes evident early) when the classroom teacher realizes that he cannot solve or treat the problems of certain youngsters in his classroom. At that time, it is necessary to call in a specialist who has additional diagnostic tools and skills. There evidently are children who do not profit from the usual classroom instruction and must be turned over to a specialist who has the time and the facilities to work with the child outside the classroom. One of the important things to keep in mind in making this referral is that the classroom teacher should indicate what steps he has taken in the classroom to overcome the problems. Those steps give the specialist some indication of what not to do, since they have already been tried by the classroom teacher.

Steps for Action

Once the teacher has looked at the problem and ways of handling it, and is aware of some of the pitfalls, the only thing to be done is to take the necessary steps to change his attitude and change his classroom so that he can conduct corrective reading activities. In order to do this, the following steps must be taken:

1. Stock up. Teachers must stock up on knowledge, causes, and symptoms of reading problems, and understand what those reading problems mean in terms of finding specific activities to overcome them. The teacher must also stock up on materials, so that when there is a problem he has a handy reference for help. He should also collect a supply of checklists so that

he can make use of these during daily classroom occupations. Checklists will give him a systematic way to observe the child's performance and will enable a better diagnosis and treatment of the problem.

2. Reorganize. There seems to be a lot of truth in the statement that one reading director made when he said, "Unless the classroom teacher reorganizes the class, he isn't likely to carry on individualized corrective activities." In the pages of this book there are a number of suggestions for ways classrooms can be set up to encourage the teacher and the student to engage in a more personal kind of diagnostic and corrective activity.

3. Observe and evaluate. As the student progresses through a sequence of skills it is necessary for the teacher to watch his progress, and to evaluate it so that he knows when the student can proceed or when he has to have additiknal help. Once again, checklists and other kinds of evaluation instruments must be stocked and used. Tests from basal readers are helpful, as are unit tests that often accompany workbooks.

4. Treat the problem. After observation and evaluation have been made, the teacher must make a decision about what specific problem has to be treated. Unless the problem is isolated and put into specific terms, the chances are that treatment will not be direct enough and that the student will not beiefit from the treatment.

5. Make a referral. As stated above, when a teacher finds that his own diagnosis and treatment does not satisfactorily help the problem, he should not hang on tenaciously to the child and prevent his progress. Make a referral to the appropriate specialist so that the child can progress with his ecucation and become an adequate pupil.

Conclusion

Again, the classroom teacher is the pivotal person in creating good readers and in correcting difficulties as they arise. The classroom teacher carries a rather awesome responsibility, therefore, for the success or failure in many aspects of life of the children under his care. In terms of corrective reading, he probably should consider himself as a general practitioner who must be aware of the most obvious symptoms of a variety of learning disorders, and must have at his disposal a variety of obvious treatments for these obvious disorders. That, at the moment, would create a tremendous amount of good for individualizing instruction and correcting many reading problems that arise in the classroom.

Appendix

Techniques for Classroom Diagnosis of Reading Problems

Definition of Terms

In describing the various types of reading instruction, educators commonly use three terms: developmental, remedial, and corrective.

Developmental instruction. Developmental reading instruction has the following characteristics: 1) The instructional starting point is the level at which the child is presently reading; 2) the child proceeds at his own developmental rate of accomplishment; and 3) reading instruction is seqential, i.e., following a definite sequence of skills and activites. Unfortunately, many educators use the term developmental in a limited way; that is, they describe developmental instruction as sequential instruction given on one level (the average level of the class) and at one rate (the class's average rate of learning).

Corrective instruction. Corrective reading instruction also includes the three characteristics of developmental instruction, but it too has a more specific referent: instruction which a) is given to less severe cases of reading disability and b) is given, by the classroom teacher, in the classroom.

Remedial Instruction. Remedial instruction includes the three characteristics of developmental instruction, but it also refers more specifically to instruction which a) is given to more severe cases of reading disability (children reading at least two years below capacity and/or grade level) and b) is given by a reading specialist outside of the classroom--usually in a special classroom or a clinic.

Diagnostic Techniques Used in Classroom Correction

The classroom teacher's initial diagnosis of the child's reading difficulties has two major objectives: 1) determining the child's instructional reading level. This is the level on which instruction should take place for the child. Reading materials on a child's instructional level are neither too easy nor frustratingly difficult for him, yet these materials are just difficult enough so that the child can make reading progress under teacher guidance. 2) determining the specific skills in which the child is deficient. Unless the diagnosis can determine particular skills, instruction may either give practice on skills already mastered or fail to give help on skills needed. Skill deficiencies must be pinpointed.

The classroom teacher can use the following techniques to diagnose a child's reading difficulties:

Group survey tests. Group survey tests normally provide measures of comprehension, vocabulary, and rate, but their main purpose is usually to provide a fairly adequate measure of the grade level at which a pupil reads; hence, these tests can be used to reveal those children reading below grade level who may be candidates for either corrective or remedial instruction. Examples of group survey tests are the Gates Primary Reading Tests and the Iowa Silent Reading Test.

Those survey tests aimed primarily at determining a pupil's average reading grade also carry some diagnostic elements. There are other group tests, however, that are more analytical and more diagnostic than the group survey test. The purpose of these group diagnostic tests is to pinpoint skill deficiencies. Those that cover kindergarten through fourth grade usually measure reading readiness, visual and auditory discrimination, vocabulary, and story reading, or the comprehension of stories or paragraphs. Tests for grades four to eight usually measure word recognition, comprehension, vocabulary, rate, and word attack. In high school grades and college grades, the tests focus on measures of vocabulary, comprehension, rate, and word attack. Some typical examples of group diagnostic tests are the Dvorak-Van Wagenen Diagnostic Examination of Silent Reading Abilities for grades four to five, six to nine, and ten to thirteen: the Bond-Balow-Hoyt New Developmental Reaiing Tests for primary reading; and the Bond-Clymer-Hoyt Developmental Reading Tests for intermediate grade reading.

Teacher-made tests. An effective and widely used technique for diagnosing reading dificiencies is the teacher-made test. The most commonly used teacher-made tests are those which, because they are testing only one or two factors, are short, simple, and often made up on the spot; i.e., when the teacher is working with a pupil. For instance, if a teacher wants to know if Johnny knows how to blend the digraph "ch," he can simply ask him to pronounce several words which begin or end with "ch;" if he wants to test his literal comprehension (recall of facts", he can ask Johnny to read several paragraphs and then ask him factual questions about the paragraph; if he wants to know if he can divide words into syllables, he can give him a number of words to syllabicate.

The informal reading inventory, however, is a longer, more complex test which the teacher gives to individual students. A carefully graded series of basal readers can be used to construct an informal reading inventory. Selections of 100 to 200 words are chosen from each book in the series, taking three selections from each book, one from the beginning, one from the middle, and one near the end. For each of these selections a few questions focusing on ideas and on facts should be constructed and presented to the pupil after he has read the selection. The pupil should be started at a relatively easy level, reading orally to the teacher and then answering the comprehension questions based upon the content. If he is unable to handle the first selection that is given to him he should be moved back toward an easier level. The child continues to read successively more difficult selections until the teacher finds out what his various reading levels are and gains the appropriate diagnostic information. The levels are as follows:

1. Independent reading level. At this level the child can read comfortably without assistance from an outsider. It is the kind of selection that he would pick on his own and feel satisfied by his performance in reading it. As he reads orally he would probably make no more than one word pronunciation error out of 100 words and achieve a comprehension score of about 90 percent. Generally his oral reading would be conversational and well-phrased. There would be little or no evidence of tension as he reads for you (Betts, 1946, p. 446).

2. Instructional level. This is the level at which pupils can make satisfactory progress under teacher guidance. The material, therefore, is challenging enough to cause the student to stumble and to need outside assistance in order to handle it with comfort. The instructional level is determined by a 95 percent accuracy and word recognition and a comprehension score of at least 75 percent. The oral reading at this level should be generally tension-free and there should be evidence of proper phrasing and rhythm (Betts, 1946, p. 539).

3. Frustration level. The frustration level marks the point at which the child can no longer function adequately with the material. He makes so many errors and has such difficulty in comprehending what he reads that it is truly a frustrating experience. Usually the score the child achieves on a group silent reading test in class is a kind of frustration level since he works at the test with high energy and concentration and would not ordinarily apply the same kind of energy and concentration in his reading.

The selections that form the informal reading inventory can be administered to the child both in an oral reading exercise and in the silent reading exercise to see what differences there are. One of the primary reasons to have the child read orally is to give the teacher an opportunity to observe the phrasing and pronunciation skills that he exhibits while pronouncing the words.

In addition to determining the student's reading levels and gathering information about his comprehension ability through informal techniques, the teacher can note many things about a child's reading performance. By using checklists and a + and - notation, he can develop a picture of the child's strengths and weaknesses.

General Reading Skills:

____ Enunciation
____ Adequate phrasing
____ Word-by-word phrasing
____ Head movements, following with finger, posture, distractibility, tenseness
____ Word-recognition difficulties:
    ____ Reversals
    ____ Wrong beginning
    ____ Wrong middle
    ____ Wrong ending
____ Word-recognition skills:
    ____ Use of context
    ____ Adequacy of sight vocabulary
____ Other difficulties
    ____ Repetitions
    ____ Omissions
    ____ Substitutions
    ____ Other

Word Attack Skills:

____ Blending skill

____ Resorts to spelling attack

____ No method of word analysis

____ Recognition of familiar parts

____ Recognition of parts of compound words

____ Recognition of word roots

____ Recognition of suffixes

____ Recognition of prefixes

____ Consonant sounds

____ Vowel sounds

Other Relevant Data:

____ Hearing status

____ Visual status

____ Speech difficulties

____ Other physical difficulties

____ Fluency in language usage

____ Chief interests

____ Ability to concentrate

____ Persistence in tasks

____ Emotional reactions (confident, shy, overaggressive, negativistic, cheerful, etc.)

____ Attitudes (toward school, teacher, reading)

____ Home environment

____ Other observations

The following information can be obtained by watching the child as he reads silently from basic reader selections:

Name and grade level of book

Rate: (words per minute)

Degree of comprehension

Vocalization (degree of lip movement, whispering, audible speech)

Finger pointing

Head movements

Sogns of tenseness

Posture

Distractibility

Other habits

*Observation in the Classroom** Observation is a technique that can and should be employed in the classroom at all times. Even while giving instruction to the class as a whole, a teacher may be noticing how the class and certain individuals are responding to the instruction.

A teacher easily identifies a student who cannot read: He avoids reading and gets better marks in subjects that do not require reading. Upon closer observation, the teacher may discover difficulties in vocabulary, word recognition, and comprehension. From further observation and from interviews he may infer that emotional difficulties are also entering into the student's reading disability.

Observation is a basic technique. Since it requires no extra time or materials, it is employed every day by every teacher. Usually, observations go unrecorded; they are used at the first opportunity to help the student.

Limitations. While observation is excellent for gaining understanding of the way a student reads, it fails to tell us *why* he reads as he does. We can only make inferences about the causes of the student's successes or failures.

Four specific principles to keep in mind when observing individuals are--

1. Since the student is always changing and growing, an observation that was made last year may not describe his present reading performance.

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*This section is a summary of Strang, Ruth, "Observation in the Classroom," *Diagnostic Teaching of Reading*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1964, pp. 41-48.

2. A teacher can observe only a small part of a student's total behavior. On the basis of such limited information, the teacher can make only tentative generalizations about the student's reading.
3. Observations made by a teacher may tell more about the teacher than about the student. His first impression of the student, his philosophy of education, and many other factors may color what he sees.
4. Ideally, observations should be interpreted in conjunction with interview, test, and other data. However, observations often are the only data available at the moment, and sometimes action should not be deferred.

Analysis of Classroom Situations. Teachers are confronted daily with situations from which they can gain an understanding of their students' reading. A detailed analysis of these situations serves as a guide to observation; it alerts the teacher to reactions or behavior which he might have overlooked otherwise. He may either start with the situation and describe the understanding he hopes to obtain from it or start with the understanding and decide from which situations such understanding can be obtained. He should try to systematize his observations with checklists, thus making learning patterns more evident.

The following checklists show kinds of information about students' reading that may be obtained in different classroom situations. In the lower grades, students are given many opportunities to tell their experiences to others. From listening to his students, a teacher learns about their vocabulary and language patterns, their interests, and personality traits. Also important are comments about home conditions and attitudes.

Some specific observations to check:

Language abilities: vocabulary: meager___, rich___, accurate___,
incorrect___

Sentence structure: incomplete sentences____, simple sentences____,
complex sentences____

Imagination: creative____, bizarre____

Organization: recounted events in proper sequence____, well-organized____,
disjointed____

Sense of humor: enjoyment of humor____, makes others laugh....

When students read aloud, the teacher is given the opportunity to observe their word recognition skills, pronunciation, phrasing, and expression. The student often reveals his attitude toward reading--whether he reads with enjoyment, indifference, dislike, anxiety, resistance, or hostility. Dramatized reading gives an even better picture of the student's ability to read with expression, feeling, and meaning.

Some specific observations:

Method of word attack: sounds out words____, tries to analyze structure____,
uses context clues____

Word recognition problems: skips words____, reverses letters, words,
phrases____, substitutes words____, guesses
wildly____

Substitutions give the teacher valuable clues about the student's comprehension of the material he is reading. If he substitutes a word that makes sense in the context of the sentence, he is probably reading for meaning; however, if the word substituted makes no sense, he is merely pronouncing words with little understanding of what he reads. When a student comes to an unfamiliar word, the teacher should observe what kinds of words give him difficulty: common words, long words, words within his experience, or words foreign to him. The teacher should also observe how he goes about finding the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Some specific observations:

Phrasing: reads word by word____, reads in phrases or other thought units____, loses place easily____, reads clearly and with expression____

Comprehension: recognizes basic vocabulary at sight____, shows an understanding of material read____, sees relationships and sequences of ideas____, can discuss what he has read ____, shows originality in interpretation____

A student's reading interest or level may be indicated by his selection of reading material in a free reading or library period. His behavior during silent reading indicates his power of concentration. (Is he merely daydreaming or is he really thinking about what he read? If he was distracted, what caused it?)

Some specific observations:

Approach to books: leafs through many books____, chooses quickly____; looks first at chapter titles and/or table of contents____, pictures____, printed pages____; tends to choose small books ____, large books____, one kind of book____, a particular author or series____, is rather uniform in choices____, chooses a variety of books____; chooses books at his own age level of interest____, below____, above____; takes books home often____, seldom____, never____, reads them through____; can discuss what he has read; returns books on time____, undamaged____; asks for books he does not find on shelves____

Oral reports are another good way of observing students' interest in certain topics and their ability to organize and report it effectively to their classmates. By observing the audience, the teacher can get an indication of ability to listen and evaluate the reports given

The teacher will observe that some students "catch on" quickly while others need to have a new concept explained several times. While the slow learners should not be ignored, the student who learns quickly should not be held back until the others catch up. While most teachers are aware that retarded readers are often embarrassed when they are laughed at for their mistakes, many fail to realize that the bright child who finds pleasure in reading may suffer equally from an anti-intellectual spirit.

Specific observations:

Attitudes: eager to participate____, interested____, indifferent____, withdrawn____

Creativity: inventive____, shows imagination____, is intellectually curious____, shows maturity of interests____

While observation is only one of several techniques that should be employed, it can be useful and helpful to the classroom teacher. He can learn much about his students through this method that he would not learn, while using only a written test. The teacher only needs to make sure that observation is used in conjunction with other data. However, sometimes observation is the only data available at the moment, and, if this is the case, action should not be deferred.

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MANUSCRIPT IV

Correspondence to any of these school systems should be addressed as follows:

Reading Coordinator
% Name of School System
City, State, Zip Code

Los Angeles, California

Oakland, California

Santa Barbara, California

San Bernardino, California

San Francisco, California

Dougherty County, Georgia

Terre Haute, Indiana

Buffalo, New York

Kenmore, New York

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Portsmouth, Virginia

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